THE TIWI
THEIR ART MYTH AND CEREMONY

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[p. 1]
[TITLE PAGE]

By the same author

OOD

1944 THE ART OF ALBERT NAMATJIRA

1948 BROWN MEN AND RED SAND

1956 THE ART, MYTH AND SYMBOLISM OF ARNHEM LAND

1956 AUSTRALIAN TREE PORTRAITS

FRONTISPIECE
Wurarbuti, the Pukamuni Leader, decorated for the Ceremony
© National Geographic Society

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[FACING p. 3]
[FRONTISPIECE]

THE TIWI
their Art, Myth and Ceremony

CHARLES P. MOUNTFORD

with 64 plates, 2 in colour
15 line drawings and a map

PHOENIX HOUSE · LONDON
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INTRODUCTION

MELVILLE ISLAND (Fig. 1), the research field of the 1954 National Geographic expedition, is, with the exception of Tasmania, the largest of the 131 Australian islands. Eighty miles from east to west, and seventy from north to south, it rises barely five hundred feet above the sea. Its level surface is 133 covered with a monotonous grey-green forest of eucalypts and acacias, 137 whose monotony is broken only by the steep cliffs and sandy beaches of the coastline, the salt-water creeks which cut deeply into the northern coasts, and the almost impenetrable mangrove swamps that line those waterways.

Between Melville Island and the mainland are the swiftly running tideways, the reefs and shoals of the Clarence and Dundas Straits, tideways so dangerous that, before the installation of a series of flashing light-buoys, no ocean-going ship would attempt to navigate their broken waters in the darkness.

Abel Tasman, in 1644, was the first European to sail along the east, north, 175 and west coasts of Melville Island and the adjacent Bathurst Island,[1] naming Cape Van Diemen and Van Diemen Gulf after the Governor-General of the Dutch East Indies. As Tasman's account of that journey was lost, we do not know whether he actually landed on the islands, or only saw them in the distance.

Sir Philip King circumnavigated the two islands in 1818 and in 1824 the British Government, both to prevent the French from settling along the northern coasts of Australia and to protect British commerce from the rapidly expanding Dutch trade, established a military post at Fort Dundas, on the Apsley Straits. After five unhappy years the authorities moved the garrison to Port Essington, on the Coburg Peninsula, on the mainland, but not before both Sir Gordon Bremer (12th Nov. 1824) and Major Campbell [114] (1834, pp. 135–60) had made some excellent observations on aboriginal graves, burial poles, bark paintings and canoes.

In the early days of this century, a buffalo hunter, Joe C. Cooper, having gained the confidence of the warlike people of Melville Island, known as the Tiwi tribe, established a camp near Cockle Point (Fig. 1) on the south-western corner of Melville Island. There he earned a living shooting buffaloes for their hides, buffaloes whose forbears had escaped from the settlement at Fort Dundas.

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[1] Melville and Bathurst Islands, separated by the narrow Apsley Straits, are both [101] a geographic and cultural unit.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958

OI20 Tiwi OI20

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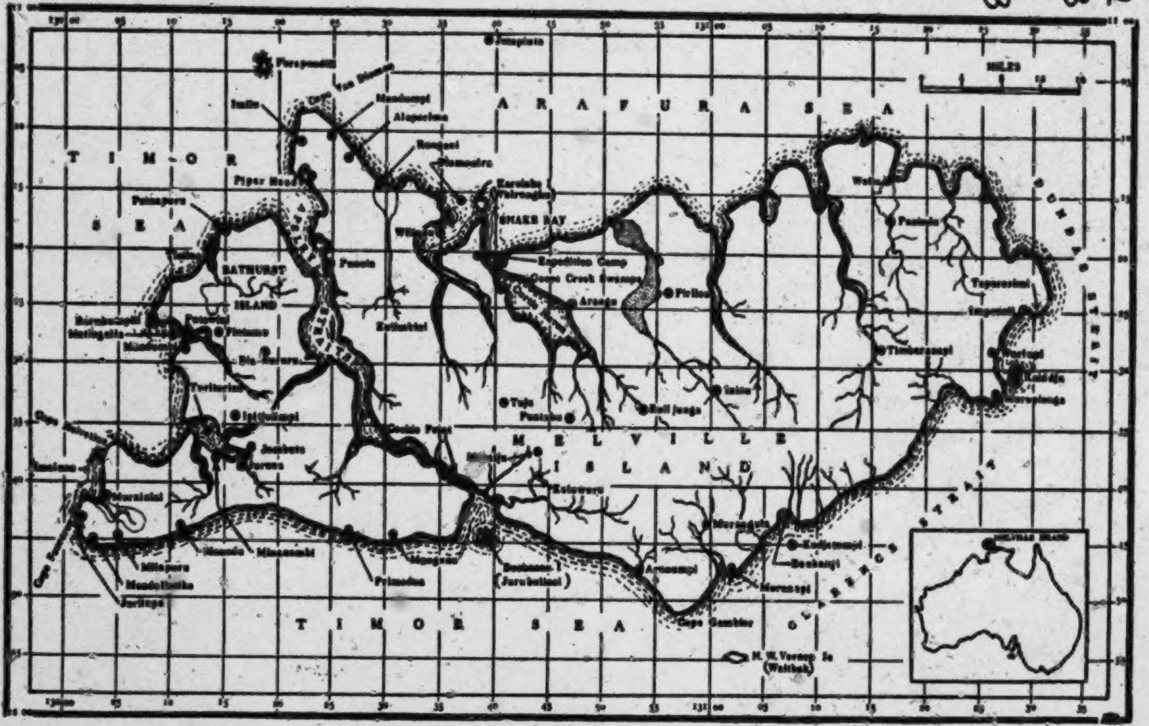
[CA 14]



A R A F U R A S E A
T I M O R S E A
T I M O R S E A
BATHURST ISLAND
M E L V I L L E I S L A N D
SNAKE BAY
Piper Head
Expedition Camp
Goose Creek Swamps
Cape Gambier
Buchanan I (Jurubelinei)
H. W. Vernon Is (Waitbah)
D U N D A S S T R A I T
MILES

FIG. 1. *Totemic Map of Melville and Bathurst Islands*

After Cooper had established himself a number of investigators, Brown 175
in 1905, Klaatsch in 1906, Spencer and Basedow in 1911, and Fry in 1913,
paid short visits to the Islands, and recorded valuable information on the 114
aborigines and their ceremonial life.

Following their departure no research work was carried out until 1929, when Hart spent a year or more among the aborigines of Melville and Bathurst Islands. But though Hart must have collected a great deal of data among the almost untouched aborigines of those times, he has published only two short papers on their customs. (Hart, 1930, pp. 167–80; pp. 280–290.)

Again there was a lag in time, except for a short paper by Harney and Elkin (1942, pp. 228–34), until Pilling in 1953, stationed at the Bathurst Island Sacred Heart Mission, spent over a year studying aboriginal life and social organization.[3]

In 1954 the National Geographic Society's expedition established a camp 121
at Snake Bay on the north coast of Melville Island (Fig. 1), and for six
months studied the ethnology, the geology and the ornithology of the area. 114
Although the National Geographic Society of America provided the bulk
of the funds, Mr. John Bonython of Adelaide financed the geological [122]
survey of Melville and Bathurst Islands.

The expedition party of American and Australian scientists was an excellent example of international co-operation. It was made up of Miss Jane Goodale, ethnologist, and Dr. Carleton Coon, Professor of Anthropology, both from the University of Pennsylvania; Mr. David Parsons, ornithologist from Yale University; Mr. Brian Daily, geologist from the University of Adelaide; Mr. William E. Harney, guide, Mr. George Joy, cook, and myself, as leader and ethnologist.

Our combined research covered a wide field. Miss Goodale concentrated on the place of the women and children in the community, Mr. Parsons collected and studied the birds of the island, Mr. Daily, by an examination of the outcropping rocks, established the geological history of Melville and Bathurst Islands, whilst I, apart from the duties of leadership, concentrated on the art, myth, and particularly the burial ceremonies.

During their visit, Dr. Carleton Coon and his wife made a special study of the physical characteristics of the aborigines.

I chose Melville Island as a centre of research, because it was evident 121
from the scattered writings of Basedow, Fry, Hart, Harney, Spencer and 101

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[3] The Sacred Heart Mission was established on Bathurst Island, opposite Cooper's camp, during 1911. [797]

101 others that the culture of the Melville and Bathurst Islanders was markedly
121 different from that of the adjacent mainland people.

It seemed evident, also, that this difference in the cultures was the result
101 of isolation for which two possible factors were responsible: (a) the natural
131 water barrier created by the Dundas and Clarence Straits (Fig. 1), and (b)
182 the inability of the Tiwi to cross those swift and dangerous tideways in their
501 primitive canoes. These canoes consisted of no more than a folded sheet of
eucalyptus bark, sewn together at either end with strips of lawyer vine,
caulked with mud, and strengthened at the gunwales with light saplings.
The old men of Melville Island assured me that, before Cooper brought
across the mainland wooden canoe (1905) bark canoes were their only means
of water transport.

174 I am convinced, from my personal experience with similar canoes in
501 north-eastern Arnhem Land, and my sea journeys across the Dundas and
Clarence Straits, that the bark canoes of the Tiwi were far too weak to have
withstood the buffetings of those turbulent waters. Nor would it have been
possible for the mainlanders to have made the journey before they acquired
[175] the wooden canoes from the Malays, which reliable historical records indi-
cate was not before the end of the eighteenth century.[8] Previous to that
[177] time, these people would have had only a bark canoe similar to that used
by the Melville and Bathurst Islanders. It would be some time, too, after
the aborigines acquired their new wooden craft, before they would be
sufficiently skilled to make that perilous journey to Melville Island, even
[609] had they wished to do so. Further, the Tiwi were notably unfriendly and
killed anyone who visited their shores. It is likely, then, that during the
historically short time that the aborigines of the mainland possessed the
wooden canoe, their visits would have had little, if any, effect on the culture
of the Tiwi.

From this evidence, it appears certain that for an unknown, and possibly
177 a lengthy period, the aborigines of the Tiwi tribe have been almost, if not
114 completely, isolated from outside cultural influences.

This supposition is supported by Hart (1930, p. 170), who states that, "It was impossible, in fact, quite unnecessary, for them (the Tiwi) to visit the mainland in their bark canoes, . . . Until the advent of white men, the Melville Islanders were not aware that any other people existed but themselves."

Foelsche (1882, p. 17), however, states that "The Melville Islanders occasionally visited the mainland for the purpose of stealing lubras (women),

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[8] Mountford, 1956, p. 410.

in which they invariably succeeded. Their canoes and weapons were similar 177
to the mainland."[4] [114]

The probability that the Tiwi have been isolated from external influences
for a long time is still further supported by their culture. Their artefacts 174
are remarkably simple—they do not even possess a spear-thrower or small 105
mounted stone tools—their art forms and ceremonial life are unlike those
in any other part of Australia, there are no secret rituals, and the social
status of the women is on a much higher plane than that of any other
aboriginal women.

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[4] From the evidence given above we can safely discard this writer's statement. Foelsche, who was a police officer in Darwin, probably quoted a rumour without checking its accuracy.

CHAPTER I

The Art of the Tiwi

1. THE ART FORMS

ALTHOUGH Melville Island is separated from the mainland of Australia by the Dundas Strait, only fourteen miles in width, the art forms on either side of this swift-running tideway bear little resemblance to each other. That of the mainland, of which the bark and cave paintings of Oenpelli are typical (Mountford, 1956, pp. 112–264; Spencer, 1928, pp. 802–24), is representational, and among the most decorative art forms employed by the Australian aborigines, while that of Melville Island is highly formalized, and cannot be interpreted without the aid of the artist. In this respect (although they employ different motifs) the art of the Melville Islanders resembles that of the aborigines of Central Australia (Mountford, 1937, pp. 84–95). 171 531) [131]

2. MEDIUMS OF EXPRESSION

The aborigines of Melville Island,[5] like those on the mainland (Spencer, 1928, p. 793) painted designs on the inside of the sheets of bark that made up their wet-weather shelters. Basedow (1913, p. 320, Pls. 19–20) figured bark paintings he collected from bark shelters on Melville Island, and Campbell (1834, p. 151), referring to shelters he saw near Fort Dundas (Punata), in Apsley Straits, writes, "Some of them were ornamented with figures drawn in white pipeclay; one, in particular, was neatly and regularly done all over, representing the cross-bars of a cell."[6] 171 353 531)

Under normal tribal conditions, however, it is in the carving and painting of the elaborate burial poles and the ceremonial spears, coupled with the decorating of the large bark baskets, that the aborigines of Melville Island find an outlet for their artistic efforts. 531

The effect of the *pukamuni* burial ceremony was evident in many of the bark paintings collected on the expedition. For example, Pl. 3D, Pl. 54F, and Pl. 54A, are essentially the same designs as a Melville Island artist would use to

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[5] For the sake of simplicity I will, in future, use the term, Melville Island, or the tribal name, Tiwi, to indicate the Melville and Bathurst Island culture, both of which are part of the same tribal unit. [101]

[6] This would have been a design similar to that on bark painting (Pl. 52D).

[p. 18 blank]

531 decorate a burial pole; and others, Pl. 2D, Pl. 10C, and Pl. 11A, similar to those he would paint on the ceremonial baskets.

I did not see or hear of figures being made in bark (Mountford, 1956, p. 443, fig. 65C, D); moulded in wax (Elkin and the Berndts, 1950, Pl. 21, Mountford, 1956, Pl. 143) or in the sands of the sea-shore (Mountford, 1956, p. 404, Pl. 91C, D), as is done in north-eastern Arnhem Land. Nevertheless, *[532] the men did carve large burial poles in the form of human beings and smaller full-length figures, associated with the *pukamuni* ceremonies. These figures bore some small resemblance to those recorded from north-eastern Arnhem Land (Berndt, 1948, Figs. A, B, Pls. 1, 2; Mountford, 1956, Pls. 130–40).

3. TECHNIQUES

386 (*a*) COLOURS. The pigments used for the decoration of the burial poles and the production of the bark paintings, were red, yellow and white ochres. As there was no suitable black pigment on the islands, the artists used crushed charcoal in its place.

[317] The source of the best ochres is a pit at Imilu on Cape Van Diemen (Fig. 1). This ochre, called *imilu*, is a bright yellow when collected,[7] but, when heated in the fire, it changes to a clear red. A soft white stone is common along the beaches. The ochres are not ground on a stone, as on the mainland (Mountford, 1956, p. 11), but, being friable, are crushed and mixed in a large cockle shell with water and fixative.

The aborigines often spoke of a superior ochre at Numanira, northern Melville Island (Fig. 1), which could be gathered only at low tide. I did not see any of this ochre in use.

(*b*) FIXATIVES. Three different types of fixative are used to ensure that the painted designs, both on the poles and the baskets, were as permanent as [314] possible. They were: the sticky gelatinous sap of one of the tree orchids (*Dendrobium* sp.); the wax and honey of the wild bee, well mixed together; [237] and the yolks of the eggs of the sea-going turtle. The fixative was either mixed with the pigments or rubbed on the painting surface.

412 (*c*) BRUSHES. Simple brushes, made of strips of bark of varying widths, square across the bottom, chewed at one end, and held as in Fig. 2A and 2C, were used for the bulk of the work.[8] For making the dots, however, the artists used a

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[423] [7] There did not appear to be any restriction on the gathering of this ochre; any aboriginal could go to Imilu and take as much as he wished.

[171] [8] The long flexible brush of the aborigines of Arnhem Land (Mountford, 1956, p. 12, fig. 3), was not used at Melville Island, although the bark brush (Fig. 2B) was often held in a similar manner.

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PLATE 1. *Artists of the Tiwi*
A, Pulanimbuwi; B, Inbidjarmeri; C, Tjamalampua; D, Malumerinita.

[p. 20 A]

412 short, cylindrical stick, about three-sixteenths of an inch in diameter. This was dipped in the colour and transferred to the painting surface with the brush held as in Fig. 2B.

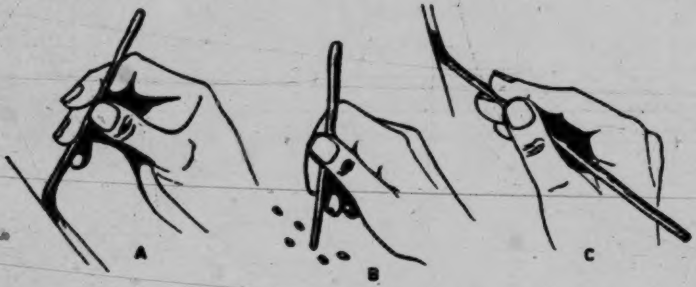

FIG. 2. *Methods of Holding Brushes*

4. THE ARTISTS

531 [463] [302] As with other aboriginal groups with whom I have worked in Central and Northern Australia, there is no special artist class; all aboriginal men and women of the Tiwi, would, on occasions, be required to paint designs on the bodies of one or another of their relatives, or on objects, particularly those associated with the *pukamuni* ceremony.

Some men, however, were looked upon as being more skilled than others in some particular field, i.e., cutting and decorating the burial poles, or the ceremonial spears, painting the large bark baskets, or the bodies of men and women who take part in the *pukamuni* or *kulama* ceremonies.

On Pl. 1 are four men who were regarded as good craftsmen and artists. *Pulanimbuwi* (Pl. 1A), hard-working and meticulous in all he did, produced the unusual *pukamuni* pole (Pl. 35); two other poles as human figures (Pl. 37A, B; 37E, F), and a number of bark paintings; Pl. 13B, D, and Pl. 14C, D, being typical.

Inbidjarmeri (Pl. 1B), being fully employed by the Superintendent of the nearby settlement, was unable to make bark paintings for me. He was most expert in carving and painting the beautiful, multi-barked ceremonial spears. Pl. 32B is his work. He was also in great demand for decorating the performers for the *pukamuni* and *kulama* ceremonies. Pl. 28K and Pl. 28R are examples of his craftsmanship in this field.

115 *Tjamalampua* (Pl. 1C) and *Malumerinita* (Pl. 1D) are two men to whom I

115 owe much, not only for the many bark baskets and paintings they made, but also for the wealth of information they so courteously imparted to me about the creation of their world, their totemic ancestors and the philosophies of their people.

These two old men are the storehouses of the tribal beliefs and philoso-
[184] phies. As the younger men are no longer taking a deep interest in their tribal
lore, the passing of *Tjamalampua* and *Malumerinita* will be an irreparable
[178] loss to the aborigines of Melville Island.

CHAPTER II

The Creation Period

WHATEVER differences may exist between the Melville Island cultures and 174
those of the mainland, and, in some aspects, those differences are consider- 773
able, the creation stories indicate that the two cultures sprang from the same
source.*

771
At the close of the creation period, both on Melville Island and the main- 773
land, the original creators, men and women, were transformed, or transformed 82
themselves, into various creatures, plants, natural forces or heavenly bodies.

Although I would not claim that the list of totems is complete, I feel certain 532 x
that the aboriginal artists pictured, on the bark paintings, most of the areas 771
created by their mythical forbears. More detailed research may reveal addi- 82
tional totemic places.

The list of the thirty-four totemic ancestors illustrated on the bark paintings is curiously unbalanced in its distribution. More than a third of these are trees, almost all eucalypts. The remaining four groups are: the natural forces, creatures of the air, the sea, and one inanimate totem, i.e. red ochre. Neither land animals nor reptiles are referred to in the bark paintings of the totemic places, although they appear in the myths.

These facts contrast strongly with the Central Australian beliefs regarding 171
their totemic creatures (Mountford, 1948, p. 23; Spencer and Gillen, 1899, 771
p. 387), where almost every living thing, particularly the creatures, took some 773
part in the creation of the topography; plant totems are uncommon in Cen- 82
tral Australia.

The same Central Australian characteristics are also evident in the myths of Groote Eylandt (Mountford, 1956, p. 21), although in the adjacent Arnhem Land, the great creators, i.e., the *Wawalik* Sisters (Warner, 1937, p. 250), and the *Djunkgao* Sisters (Berndt, 1952; Mountford, 1956, p. 267; Warner, 1937, p. 336), made the bulk of the topography, plants and creatures.

Although the Groote Eylandt pantheon, like that of Melville Island, originated as men and women, they were, almost without exception, changed to non-human totems, whereas the great creators of Arnhem Land, the *Wawalik* and the *Djunkgao* Sisters, have always remained human.

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* Little research has been carried out on the creation stories of the Australian aborigines; Spencer and Gillen (1899, p. 387) giving the most detailed account. [114]

1. THE CREATION OF THE LAND OF THE TIWI

773 In the beginning there was no light, the earth was flat and featureless; no hills or valleys broke its monotonous surface, no trees covered its nakedness, no call of birds disturbed its quietness. It was a dead, silent world.

Then, at some period in those dim and far-off times, known to the Melville Islanders as the *palaneri*, an old blind woman, *Mudungkala*, rose miraculously out of the ground at Murupianga, south-eastern Melville Island, carrying in her arms three infants, two girls, *Wuriupranala* and *Murupiangkala*, and a boy, *Purukupali*.[10] No one knows from where she came, nor after she had finished the creation of the land of the Tiwis, where she went.

Clasping her children to her breast and crawling on her knees, *Mudungkala* travelled slowly northward, the fresh water, that bubbled up in the track she made, becoming the swift tideway of Dundas Strait now separating Melville Island from the Coburg Peninsula on the mainland (Fig. 1).

Mudungkala then turned westward, and, as she formed the northern shores of Melville Island as far as Cape Van Diemen, she made occasional journeys inland, creating the Johnson and Lethbridge Bays, Curtis Haven, the Tjipripu River, Shark Bay, and the northern entrance of Apsley Straits.

Mudungkala, still carrying her children, crawled along the west coast of Bathurst Island until she reached Cape Fourcroy, creating Port Hurd on the way. On Turiturina Island in Port Hurd, the mythical bird-men and women, and later, the *Ningaui* spirit people, performed the first *kulama* ceremonies.

At Cape Fourcroy, the old woman turned toward her starting place, Murupianga. One side of the wide channel she created became the southern shores of Bathurst Island, where, at Maundu, the dreaded *Maratjis* made their home.

But when *Mudungkala* reached the present Jurubulinai (Buchanan Island), she thought she was making the island too large. So, remembering the deep inlet near Cape Van Diemen, she crawled northward, her track becoming the winding Apsley Straits that now separate Melville from Bathurst Island.[11] She then turned back, felt her way to Jurubulinai[12] at the southern end of

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[115] [10] Not all the informants mentioned *Purukupali*, although, in the creation period, it was *Purukupali* who brought the spirit children, the *Pitipituis*, to their mothers.

[11] At this point in the creation story, some informants interpolated a myth that describes how *Mudungkala*, under a different name, was speared by *Puruti* (sea osprey) and *Jirakati* (sea-eagle). This myth, described on page 26, is obviously an accretion.

[12] In the last phase of creation, this island was the totem place of a woman of a similar name, *Mudungkala*, one of the wives of *Tukimbini*. At present we do not know the correct relationship between these two women; further research no doubt will clarify the situation.

Apsley Straits, continuing her journey eastward until she reached her starting point at Murupianga. On that last journey, *Mudungkala* created the Clarence Strait, thus completely separating the land of the Tiwis from the rest of Australia. 773

Before *Mudungkala* crawled southward, out of all knowledge of the Tiwi, she decreed that the bare land should be clothed with vegetation and inhabited with creatures, so that her children, whom she left behind at Murupianga, should have food.

2. THE FIRST INHABITANTS

The two daughters of *Mudungkala*, *Wuriupranala* and *Murupiangkala*, with their brother, *Purukupali*, established themselves in the new land.

The accounts of this period are vague and indefinite, the most consistent being that *Purukupali* visited one or another of the homes of the spirit children, the *Pitipituis*, brought some back, and gave them to his sisters, *Wuriupranala* and *Murupiangkala*, so that they could become mothers.[18] Thus the family at Murupianga multiplied, and, although many of the genealogies are confused and unreliable, those of the main personalities appear to be consistent.

Murupiangkala, whose husband the aborigines did not remember, had one daughter, *Tukumbuna*, who, in turn, married *Wilindu*.

Tukumbuna had two daughters, *Wilinduela* and *Numanirakala*, and a son, *Tukimbini*. *Tukimbini's* wife, *Waia*, gave birth to one daughter, *Bima*, who became the wife of *Purukupali*. It was the death of their son, *Djinini*, that brought the creation period to a close.

Wuriupranala, whose husband was *Andjalui*, had one son, *Wuriuprinili*. The aborigines did not know who were the parents of *Tjapara*, who later quarrelled with *Purukupali*.

In those early days there was neither light nor heat, so the descendants of old *Mudungkala* had to grope around in the darkness to find their food, and having found it were forced to eat it raw.

Once two men, *Jurumu* (later the wedge-tailed eagle), and *Mudati* (the fork-tailed kite), whose parents the aborigines did not know, were rubbing [372] two sticks together, when they noticed a speck of light where the heat, caused by the friction between the two sticks, had ignited the powdered wood-dust.

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[18] The aborigines, who almost certainly do not understand physical paternity, believe [842] that the *Pitipituis* have always existed although they could not explain their origin. In the later period of creation, it was one of the duties of *Purukupali* to bring the spirit children to his wife, *Bima*, who gave them to the women. Before he died, however, *Purukupali* told the *Pitipituis* to seek their mothers through the medium of their fathers.

773 [372] Puzzled over this new phenomenon, *Jurumu* placed the smouldering wood-dust into the pith of a dead pandanus palm and blew upon it. To the surprise of both men the speck became larger and larger, finally bursting into a flame. This frightened the men so badly that they rushed to *Purukupali* and asked him to destroy the strange thing they had made. But when *Purukupali* saw the blazing wood and felt its heat he realized that *Jurumu* and *Mudati* had inadvertently discovered something that would give the aborigines not only light to dispel the darkness, but heat to cook their food and to keep them warm.[14]

[821] Calling his sister, *Wuriupranala*, he gave her a torch of bark lit from the blazing log and told her that it was her duty to keep it alight always. *Tjapara*, who later became the moon, was given a smaller torch.

With the coming of light and heat, the descendants of *Mudungkala* spread over the island, hunting and camping in places which, at the close of the creation period, became their totemic country.

About that time, two men, *Puruti* and *Jirakati*, were spearing fish in Tiaupu, a freshwater swamp at Piper Head, near the northern entrance to Apsley Straits, when they noticed, by the movements of the stems of the water-lilies, some large creature moving about under the water.

[823] Not knowing it was his mother, *Tipuru-undunga*, *Puruti* speared her in the neck. Screaming with pain and urinating in her fright, *Tipuru-undunga* rushed into the sea, which in those days was fresh water, polluting it so much with her blood and urine that it became as salt as the sea of today.

[825] The wounded *Tipuru-undunga* changed herself into the tall, stately bird, the jabiru (*Xenorhynchus asiaticus*) which now lives on the edge of the freshwater lagoons; while the fishermen, *Puruti* and *Jirakati* became the sea-osprey (*Pandion haliaetus*) and the graceful white-headed sea-eagle (*Haliaetus leucogaster*).[15]

During those early *palaneri* times, a man, *Jirakupai*, lived beside a freshwater lagoon, *Jirininga*, near Cape Fourcroy, south-western Bathurst Island. He had married two sisters, *Kuraruna* and *Jaknia*.

[411] *Jirakupai* was an expert in the making of both the large many-barbed, male spears, *tunkaringa*, which have a row of barbs on one side (Pl. 32A), and the female spears, *tunkaguni*, with their double row of barbs (Pl. 32B). Both forms are now used in the *pukamuni* rituals.

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[14] The aborigines distinguish between light (*milaijuka*) from the sun or burning wood, and heat (*ikwani*) from glowing coals.

[15] The large hawk-like birds, *Jirakati*, the sea-eagle, *Puruti*, the sea-osprey, and *Mudati*, the fork-tailed kite, appear as men in a number of the myths. In each one they transformed themselves from men into birds.

Jirakupai had just made a number of these weapons, when a party of men 773 from eastern Melville Island rushed into his camp and speared him in the back many times. But, as they struck, *Jirakupai* plucked the spears out and cast them at his opponents. Then howling loudly with pain and picking up the spears he had just made, *Jirakupai* dived into the water to escape further injury.

His wives, to avoid capture, changed themselves into birds, *Kuraruna* 773 becoming the night-heron (*Nycticorax caledonicus*) and *Jaknia*, the brown 825 heron that frequents the mangrove swamps (possibly *Butorides striata*).

The next morning his enemies saw *Jirakupai* floating in the water, no longer as a man, but as a crocodile. The spear wounds in his back had healed and grown into a spinal crest, his mouth, through shouting so much in his pain, had grown longer and larger, while his bundle of spears had been transformed into his tail, on the extreme end of which was a male, *tunkaringa*, spear, with barbs only at one side.

The totem place of the crocodile (*Crocodilus porosus*) is pictured on the 532x bark painting, Pl. 16a.

In this painting the central disc is the totemic lagoon, *Jirininga*, near which six crocodiles are resting on the mud. The light-coloured vertical panels are the nests of the crocodiles and the short transverse bars, their eggs.

On the mainland, south of Wulrungku (Karslake Island), three men, 773 *Mudati*, his younger brother, *Pilibiliningi*, and *Jurumu* lived in the same camp as an unmarried woman, *Parabruma*.

Mudati and *Parabruma* were fond of each other, a fact which infuriated *Jurumu*, who wanted *Parabruma* for a wife.

One day, when *Jurumu* was out hunting, he saw a bandicoot[16] *tipapu*, run from his grass nest into a hollow tree for shelter. This suggested an idea to *Jurumu* as to how he could injure, or, perhaps, incapacitate his rival. Making a number of short, sharp sticks, he buried them, point upward, in the ground, rearranging the grass nest over them so that it would not show signs of having been disturbed. Then going to *Mudati* he suggested that they should hunt together.

Of course, *Jurumu* led his rival to the faked bandicoot nest where, gesticulating excitedly, he told his companion to jump on the nest before the bandicoot escaped. But *Mudati* demurred, saying that if he waited until the bandicoot showed itself, he could kill it with his throwing stick.

But *Jurumu* was so insistent that his was the better way that *Mudati*, not suspecting treachery, obeyed his instructions and jumped on the faked nest. [825]

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[16] These bandicoots build flimsy grass shelters under which they hide.

773 As the sharpened sticks pierced his feet, *Mudati* fell to the ground calling
825 *girik-girik* (his call today), then changing himself into the fork-tailed kite (*Milvus migrans*), rose into the air and flew away.[17]

Quickly *Jurumu* sought out the woman, *Parabruma*, and proposed marriage, but she, knowing of his treachery, angrily refused him. Incensed and disappointed, *Jurumu* struck *Parabruma* on either side of the head with his throwing stick, cutting her head so badly that long pieces of bleeding skin hung down on each side.

Screaming with pain (her present-day call), *Parabruma* changed herself into the masked plover (*Lobibyx miles*). One can still see those red flaps of skin hanging on either side of her face. Intent on revenge, *Mudati's* brother, *Pilibilininga*, crept up behind *Jurumu* and speared him in the back. Shouting "*gutli-gutli*" (his call), *Jurumu* changed himself into the wedge-tailed eagle (*Oroaetus audax*). When *Pilibilininga* saw this he became a small brown hawk (unidentified).

Jurumu appears in another early creation myth when he, his wife *Narina*,
773 and her brother, *Kilpuruni*, lived in the same camp. One day, when the woman was out in the forest collecting food for her husband, *Kilpuruni* came up and asked for some. *Narina* offered him an opossum, but he said he was not fond of that meat. After refusing wild honey and several other foods, *Kilpuruni* admitted that he really wanted *Narina* to go in the bush with him. *Narina* refused, saying they could not do so, because they were brother and sister. However, *Kilpuruni*, by persistence and cajolery, finally had his way.

On returning to camp, *Narina* confessed her misdeeds to *Jurumu*, who, although he was angry and punished his wife, did not mention the matter to his brother-in-law. Biding his time, he invited *Kilpuruni* to go with him to look for hives of wild bees.

They had both climbed a high eucalyptus tree, when *Jurumu* showed his brother-in-law a hive at the end of a long projecting branch. Waiting until *Kilpuruni* had climbed out to investigate the hive, *Jurumu* cut the limb, which crashed to the ground on the top of the unfortunate victim.

Kilpuruni, all flattened out, changed himself into the present-day blanket
[825] lizard (*Chamydosaurus kingii*); *Narina*, who, in spite of his misdeeds, was fond of *Kilpuruni*, became the black cockatoo (*Calyptorhynchus banksi*) and still mourns for her unfortunate brother, while *Jurumu*, now the wedge-tailed eagle, is always on the look-out to kill and eat his wife's seducer.

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[171] [17] A myth, with many points of resemblance, except that the main actors were crows and a wedge-tailed eagle, was collected by the author from the Adnjamatana tribe of the northern Flinders Ranges of South Australia. (Mountford, 1937, field notes.)

3. THE DEATH OF PURUKUPALI

While many of the people of the early creation period were spreading over the island, the original family, *Wuriupranala*, *Murupiangkala* and *Purukupali*, and their descendants, had established themselves on south-eastern Melville Island; *Murupiangkala*, with her daughter *Tukumbuna* and her grandchildren, *Tukimbini*, *Wilinduela* and *Numanirakala*, at Murupianga; *Wuriupranala* with her son *Wuriuprinili*, at Wuriupi; and *Purukupali*, his wife *Bima* and their infant son, *Djinini*, at Impanali (Fig. 1). 773

Purukupali was strongly attached to *Djinini*. Every morning, when *Bima* went out food-gathering, she would take *Djinini* with her, bringing him back to *Purukupali* at the end of the day, together with the food she had collected.

In the same camp lived an unmarried man, *Tjapara*, who used to persuade *Bima* to leave her child asleep under the shade of a tree and sneak into the forest with him. This intrigue had been going on for some time when, on one very hot day, *Bima* stayed away from her child too long, for, when she returned, the shade had moved and *Djinini* was lying dead in the hot sun. Distraught with grief, *Bima* chanted her song of remorse—

Bili wangia tingatia
(Evil woman am I to have caused the death of my son.)

When *Purukupali* heard of the death of *Djinini*, his anger knew no bounds.[18] Striking his wife on her head with a throwing stick, and hunting her into the forest, he decreed that death should come to the whole world. As his son had died, said *Purukupali*, so the whole of creation would die, and once dead, never again would come to life. There was no death before that time.

Tjapara remonstrated with *Purukupali*, and pleaded for the dead body of *Djinini*, promising to restore him to life in three days.[19] But *Purukupali* was so adamant that the two men quarrelled about this matter until *Purukupali*, losing his temper, threw a *muruguna* (Pl. 32D) at *Tjapara* who replied with the forked throwing stick, *miluanta* (Pl. 32C) known today as *Tjapara's muruguna*. Soon the two men were locked in a deadly struggle, each wounding the other severely in the face and body.

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[18] My informant stated that it was not the intrigues of *Tjapara* and *Bima* that enraged *Purukupali*, but that, by their selfishness, they had caused the death of his son.

[19] This is a reversal of ideas. In the mainland myths it is the moon that brings death to mankind (Mountford, 1956, p. 503), but among the Tiwi, it is the moon who endeavours to prevent death coming to the world. This is one of the many factors that suggest that the Tiwi must have been separated from the effects of the mainland cultures for a considerable period. [171] [174]

773 Still railing, *Purukupali* picked up the dead body of his son, which *Bima* had wrapped in a sheet of paper-bark, and walking backward into the sea, called out loudly as the waters closed over his head,

Maulianganili awangtini tangini mu mu.
(You must all follow me; as I die, so must you all die.)

[823] The place where *Purukupali* died, adjacent to Impanali, on the east coast of
Melville Island, became a whirlpool so strong that any aboriginal who approached it in a canoe would be drowned. When *Tjapara* saw what had
773 happened, he changed himself into the moon. But he did not entirely escape
821 the decree of *Purukupali*, for, even though *Tjapara* is eternally reincarnated, he has to die for three days. On any clear night, one can see on the face of the moon-man the wounds which he received in his fight with *Purukupali* so long ago.

x 532 One bark painting, Pl. 2B, c, deals with the death of *Purukupali* and his son *Djinini*. At *a*, is the whirlpool off Impanali Point, eastern Melville
773 Island, where *Purukupali*, *b*, carrying his dead son, disappeared beneath the surface of the water.

The foot-marks of *Purukupali*, as he walked backward into the water, are the white dots at *c*; his arms, the two white bars, at *d*; and the dead child he carried is at *e*. The moon-man, *Tjapara*, at *f*, is asking for the body of the dead child to restore him to life.

The moon in the sky is shown at *g*; the forked throwing stick, *miluánta* at *h*; and at *j* are the plain throwing sticks, *muruguna*, which when thrown by *Purukupali*, caused the wounds on the face of *Tjapara*.

At *l*, *l*, are the goose-feather balls, *tokwianga* (Pl. 31B), of *Purukupali*; *n*, *n*, his cane armlets, *jairinis* (Pl. 31H); *s* (upper left) is his cockatoo-feather head ornament, *primitiki*; *k*, *k*, are his bark baskets, *wanatuna*; *u*, his firesticks; *o*, is his camp fire; and *r*, his water-hole.

Tjapara's fireplace, an unlocalized spot, *Oulini*, in the sky, is at *q*; his campfire is at *p*, and his firestick at *t*.

4. THE PUKAMUNI OF PURUKUPALI

773 When *Tukimbini*, who was living at Murupianga, heard of the death of *Purukupali*, he sent a message stick to *Talinini* of the honey-people of central Bathurst Island, appointing him the ceremonial leader (*alouwia*) of the burial rituals.

At the same time, because they were near at hand, he told the people who lived at Murupianga, Wuriupi and Wailu, that as they were the appointed "workers" (*wunorus*), it would be their duty to cut the burial poles, *tutinis*, 773 make and paint the large ceremonial baskets, *wunamane*, and the elaborate *pukamuni* spears, *tunkaringa*, as well as to clear the burial ground at Tapararimi, which was east of Impanali, the place where *Purukupali* died. As *Purukupali* had entered the sea and was drowned, there was no grave to cover and keep clean, as there would be at a usual *pukamuni*.

The "working party", who cut the poles with stone axes, consisted of the men, *Andjalui* (fresh water), *Wuriuprinili* (fire), *Tukimbini* (honey-eater), *Jidati* (saw-fish), *Timalana* (mosquito), *Tadawala* (shark) and *Pulajerapi* (mullet). Two turtle women, *Garagaləni* and *Ringa* made some of the large *pukamuni* baskets, and a honey woman, *Latungkala*, who was not one of the "workers", another basket, which was decorated by the honey-men, *Putuki* and *Kaljapini*.

While the "working party" were busy at their tasks, *Talinini*, the honey-man of Bathurst Island, sent specially carved message sticks, *purunkita* [211] [532]* (Fig. 5F, G, H) to the various groups of men and women on Bathurst and Melville Islands, instructing them to assemble at certain places, then move eastward to Taparariml, performing the *ilania* ceremonies[20] on the way.

A bark painting, Pl. 3A, B, deals with the assembling of the people for 532x *Purukupali's pukamuni*. 773

The black disc, *d*, at the bottom of the painting, is Bia-wururu, central Bathurst Island, where the leader, the honey-man, *Talinini*, with *Mauwini* and *Taparalili* performed the first *ilania* ceremony. Pintamu, *g*, is the home of *Talinini* and Putawini, *h*, that of *Mauwini*.

The second *ilania* was performed at Rarukumpili, *e* (western Bathurst Island). A fish-man, *Pulangarani*, a participant of this ceremony, lived on an adjacent point of land, *f*. The "workers" from the east coast also performed *ilanias* at Ininu, *j*, central Melville Island,[21] as well as at three localities on the east coast, i.e., Wurlupi, *l*, Murupianga, *m*, and Tapararimi, *n*.

The central disc, *k*, is Tapararimi, where the creation people, from all parts of the Islands, assembled to perform the final *pukamuni* rituals of *Purukupali*.

The many lines, *a*, *a*, at the top and bottom of the painting, symbolize the routes of the ancestral men as they walked to Tapararimi, and *b*, *b*, paths taken by the women, who always travel to a *pukamuni* ceremony by a different route from that of the men.

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[20] The *ilanias* are performed every evening for some weeks before the final *pukamuni* rituals (p. 68).

[21] Another account places this *ilania* at Puanaba.

773 x[532] Circles *o*, *o*, are places where the women stood at *Purukupali's* ceremony, and lines *e*, *e*, the paths they made as they danced toward the central dancing ground, the *milimika*.

[184] According to other informants, the honey-men from Bathurst Island and other groups from western Melville Island assembled and performed an *ilania* at Tuju, while the people from south and south-western Melville Island performed yet another *ilania* at Puntubu (Fig. 1).

At the conclusion of these *ilanias* the mythical people from the west met +[532] at Rulijunga, where *Mantinuria*, one of the eucalyptus-tree women (Pl. 18A) had prepared a ceremonial ground for them. Here the assembled people performed another *ilania*, after which they moved off as a body to Timbaranapi, where the "workers", having cut the poles and prepared the *pukamuni* spears, baskets and other paraphernalia, had already assembled for the final *ilania*.

After a ceremonial fight[38] and the performance of the *ilania* ceremony, the men and women travelled to Tapararimi by different paths to carry out the final rituals.

x532 A simple bark painting, Pl. 2A, pictures the *pukamuni* ground of *Purukupali* at Tapararimi.

773 The lower black space is the ceremonial ground (*milimika*) on which the participants performed their dances, and the white area on the top, the several honey-men, one of whom, *Talinini*, was in charge of the rituals.

The five upright vertical panels are the *tudinis* (*pukamuni* poles); the lower line of black horizontal rectangles represents the red ochre, and the upper line of rectangles, black paint, with which the performers decorated themselves.

[821] The dots represent paint on the bodies of the caterpillar men, the *Maludaianini*, who, at the close of the ceremony, transformed themselves into the Milky Way.

The *pukamuni* rituals and those who mourned beside the poles at Tapararimi are illustrated on a bark painting, Pl. 2D, E.

The central black oval, *c*, is the swift whirlpool off Impanali, where *Purukupali*, walking along the track, *f*, *f*, with his dead son in his arms, drowned himself.

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[764] [38] In the ceremonies of the present day, the "workers" when they return from cutting the poles, which are adjacent to the grave, are looked upon as *mopaditis* (spirits of the dead). Before the *ilania* can proceed, the *pukamuni* men and the "workers" take part in a ceremonial fight (Pl. 25D), in which the "workers" (as *mopaditis*) are vanquished. During creation times, a similar fight took place at Timbaranapi, when the *pukamuni* people from the west coast met the "workers" from the east.

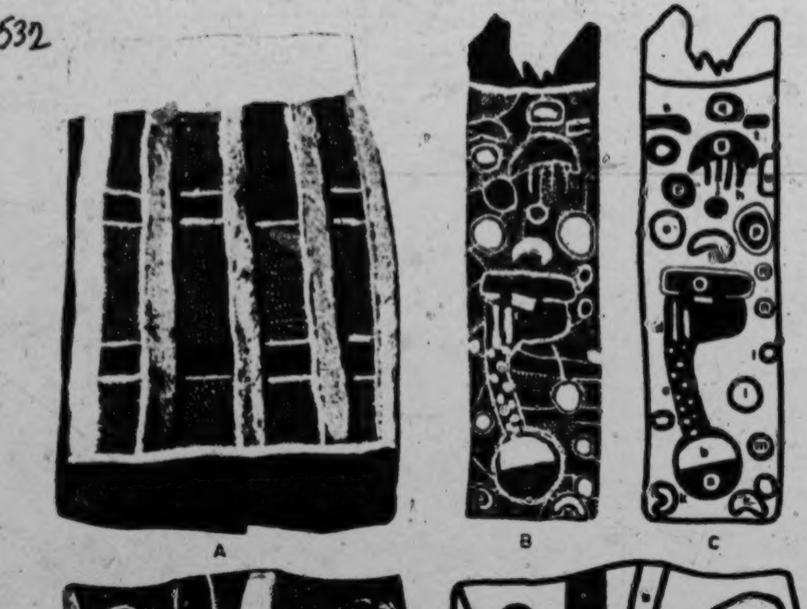

PLATE 2. *Bark Paintings of the Totemic Places*
A, D, E, Pukamuni of Purukupali; B, C, Death of Purukupali.

[p.32 A]

x532

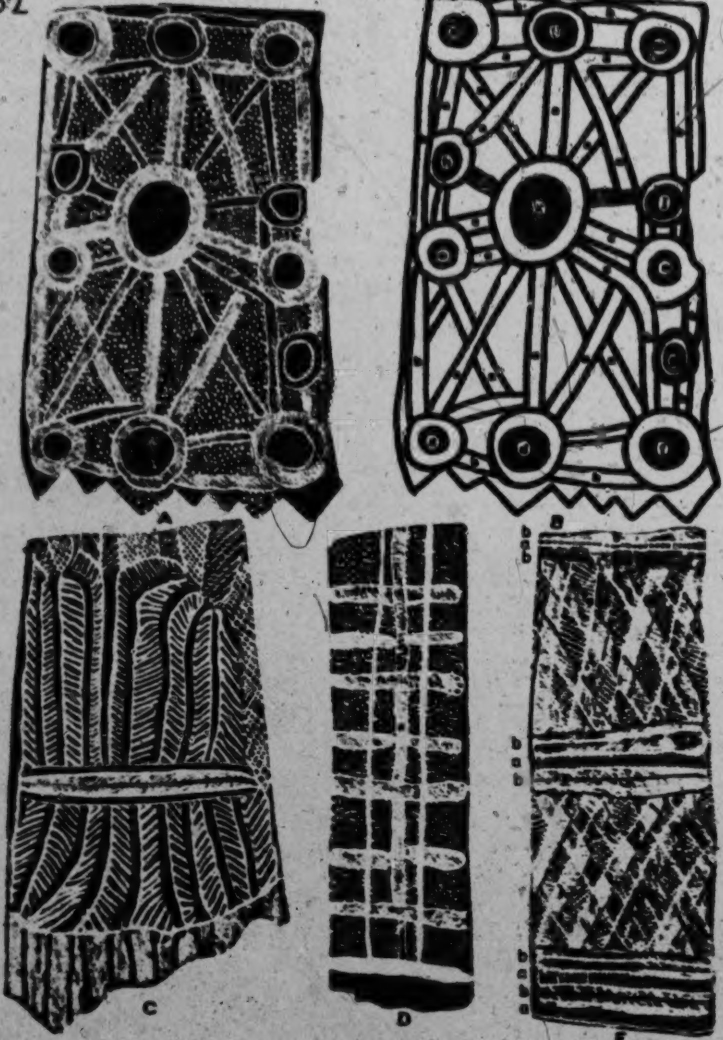

PLATE 3. *Bark Paintings of the Totemic Places*
A, B, Journey to Pukamani or Purukupali; C, Decorations at Pukamani Ceremony. D, E, Designs for Pukamani Poles.

[p 32 B]

532^x

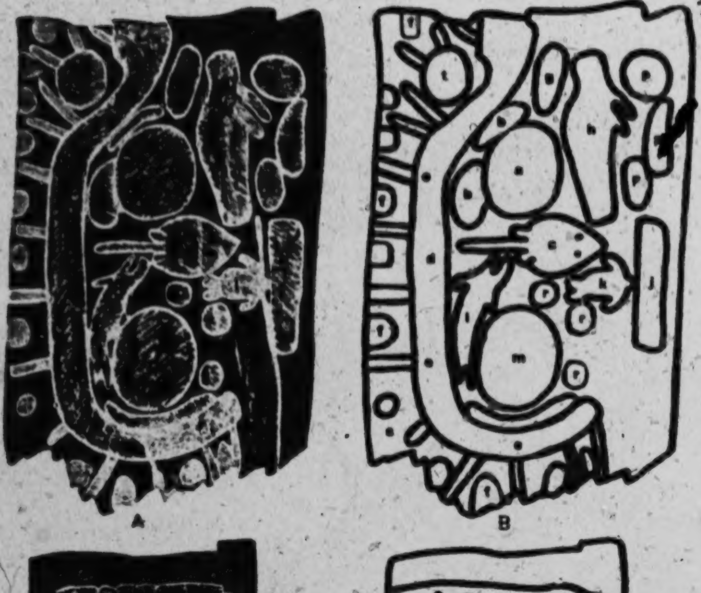

PLATE 4. *Bark Paintings of the Totemic Places*
A, B, C, D, Honey-eater, at Murupianga.

[p. 32 C]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958

OI20 Tiwi OI20

x532

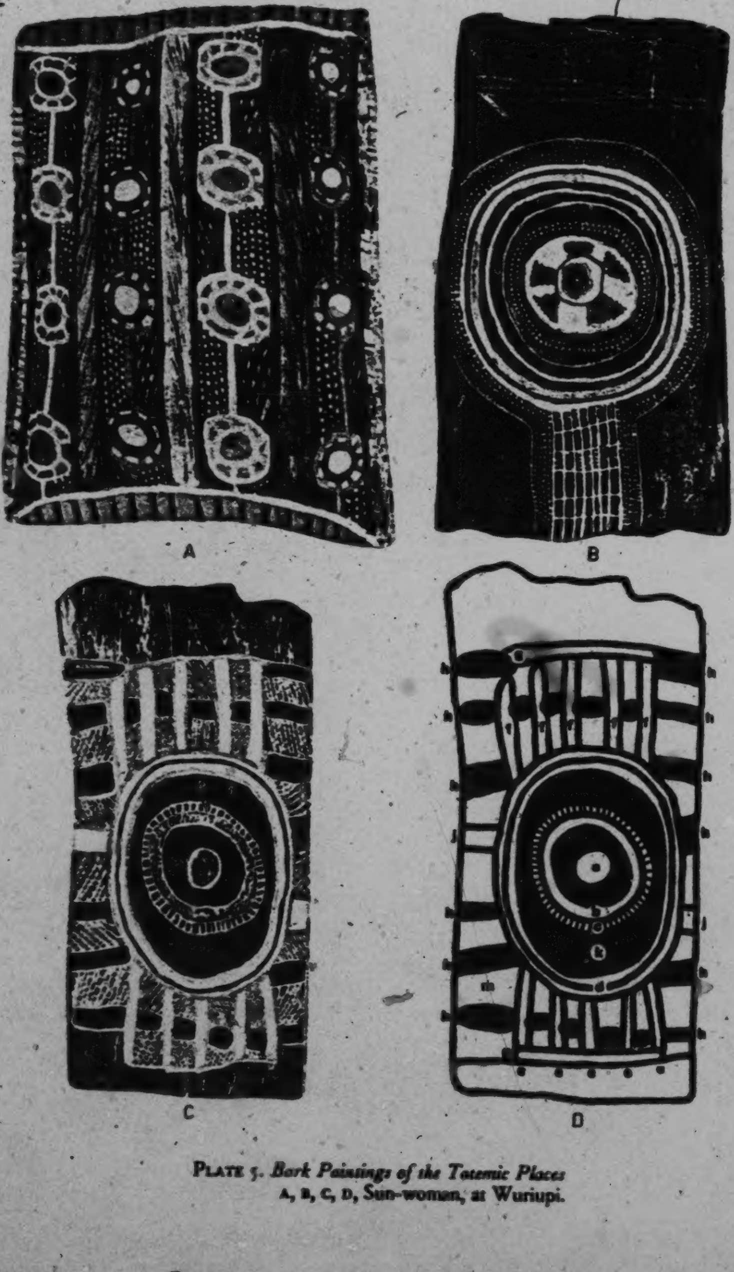

PLATE 5. *Bark Paintings of the Totemic Places*
A, B, C, D, Sun-woman, at Wuriupi.

[p.32 D]

532x

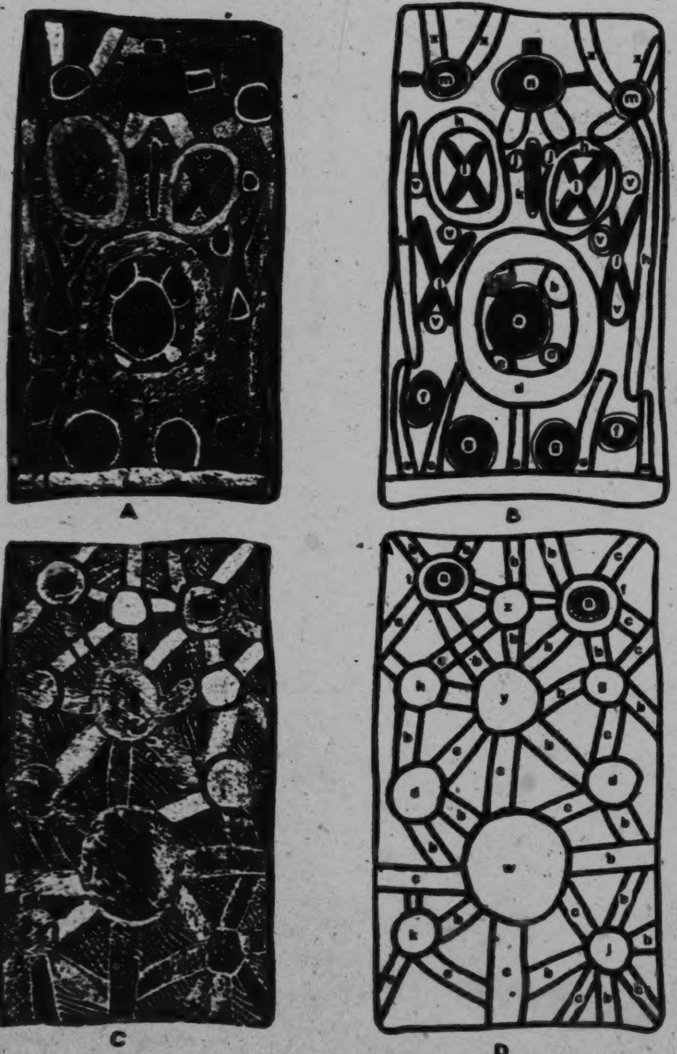

PLATE 6. *Bark Paintings of the Totemic Places.*
A, B, Sun-woman, at Wuriupi; C, D, Honey-eater, at Murupianga.

[p. 32 E]

V

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

*532

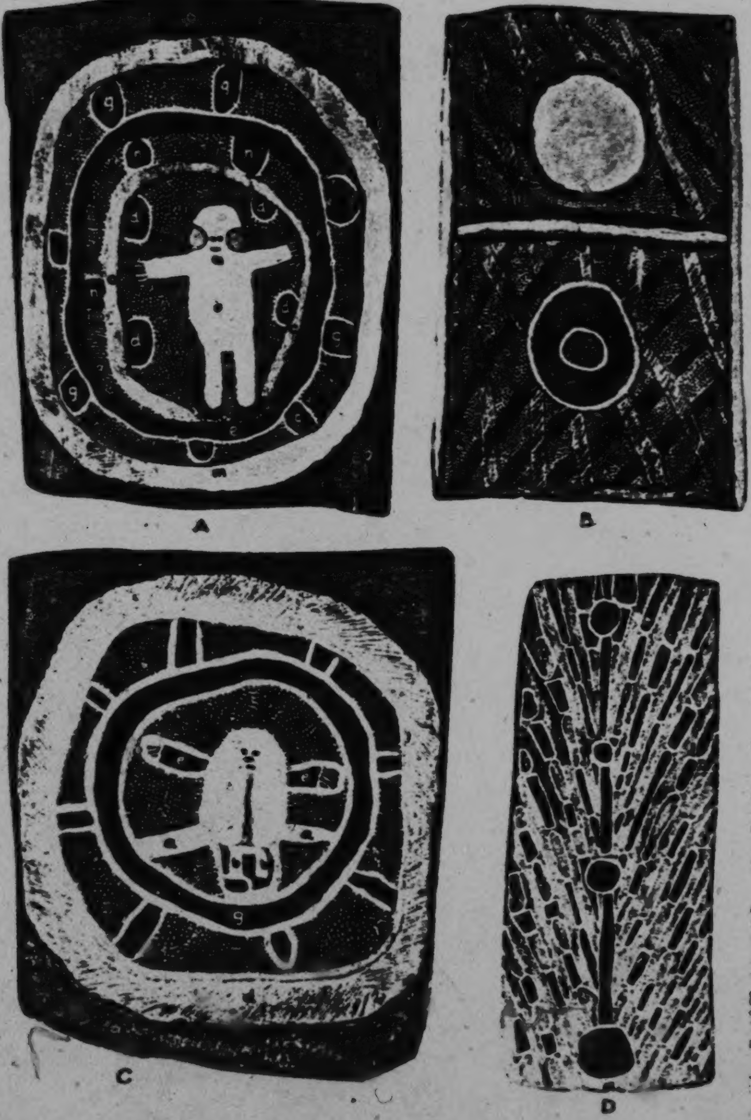

Plate 7. *Bark Paintings of the Totemic Places*
A, Honey-eater at Murupianga; B, C, D, Sun-woman at Wuriupi.

[p.32F]

532x

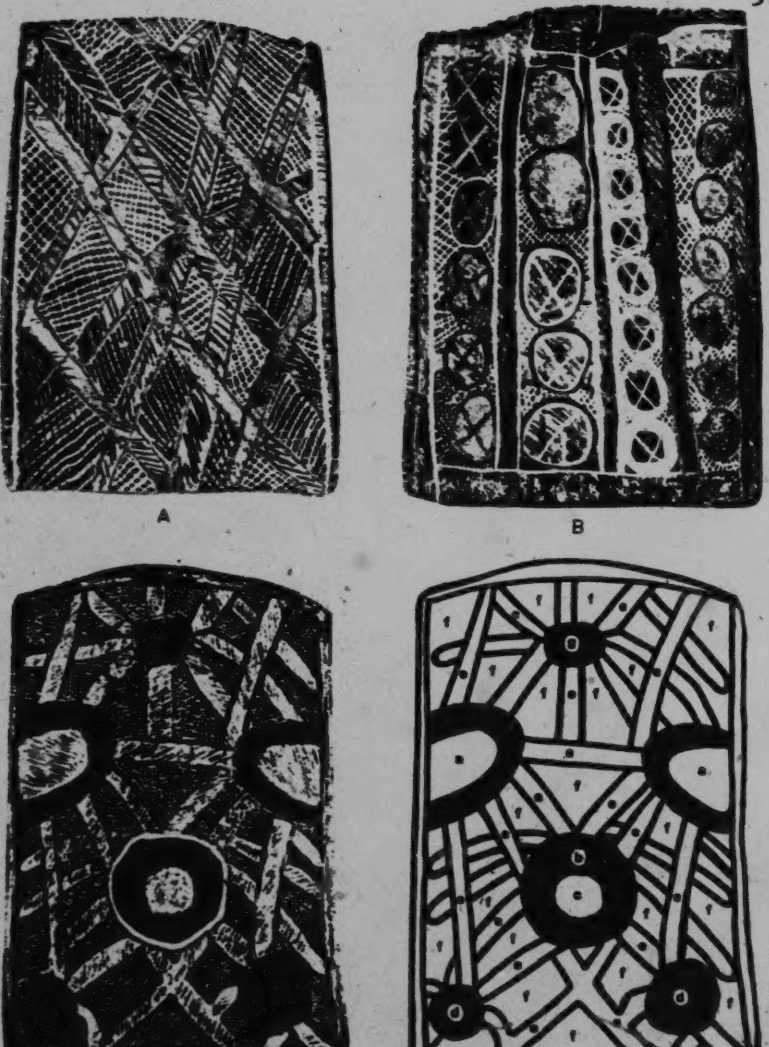

PLATE 8. *Bark Paintings of the Totemic Places*
A, B, C, D, Turtle at Murupianga.

[p. 326]

*532

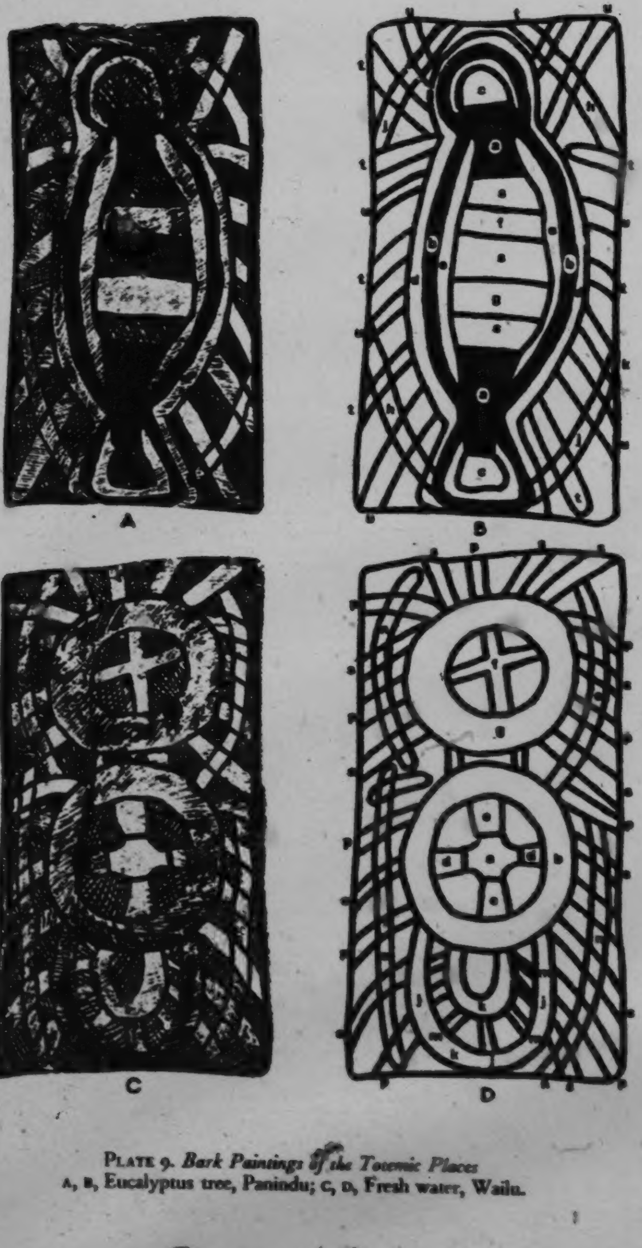

PLATE 9. *Bark Paintings of the Totemic Places*
A, B, Eucalyptus tree, Panindu; C, D, Fresh water, Wailu.

[p. 32 H]

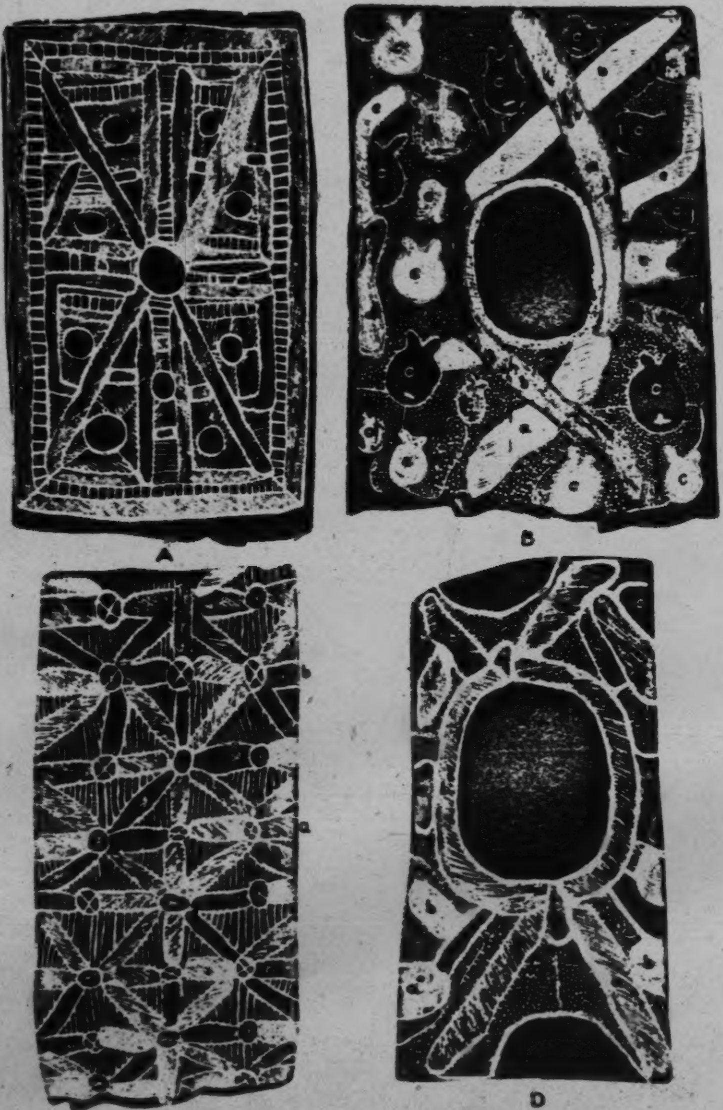

PLATE 10. *Bark-Paintings of the Totemic Places*
A, Crocodile, at Mundinju; B, Frog, at Wailu; C, Cat-fish, at Pirilou; D, Pakadringa, at Wailu.

*532

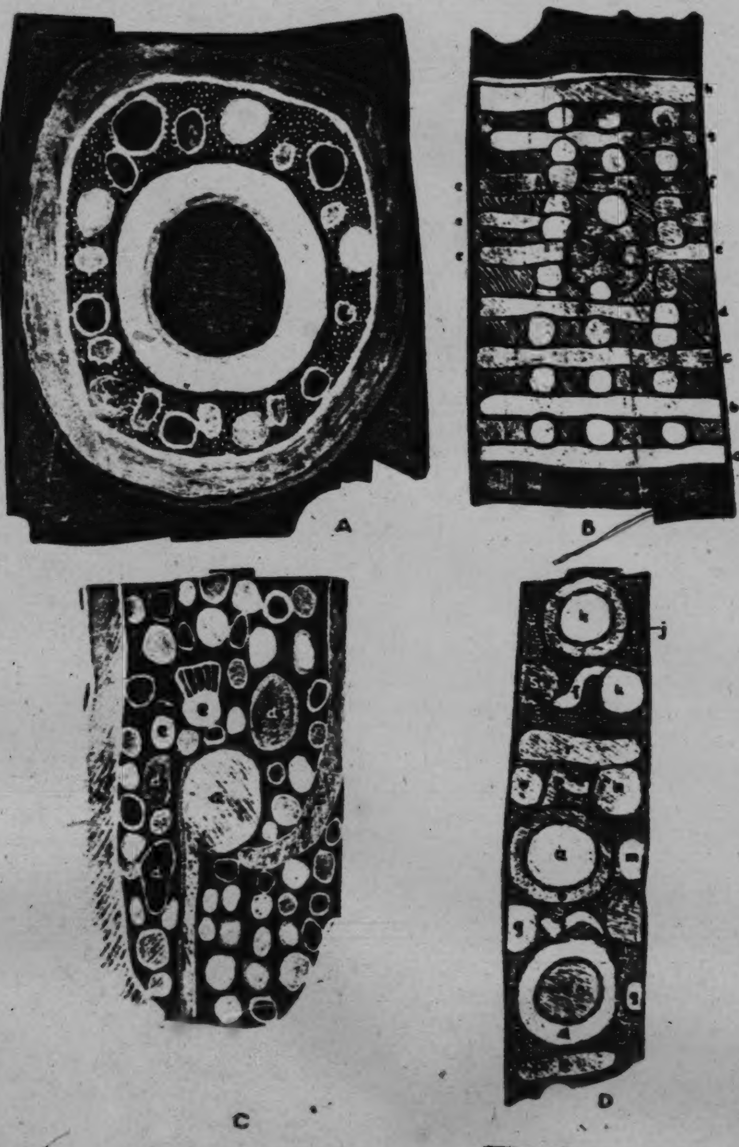
A
B
h
g
f
e
e
e
e
d
c
b
a
C
D
j

PLATE 11. *Bark Paintings of the Totemic Places*
A, B, Crocodile at Wilindu; C, D, Fish at Arangu.

[p. 32 J]

532x

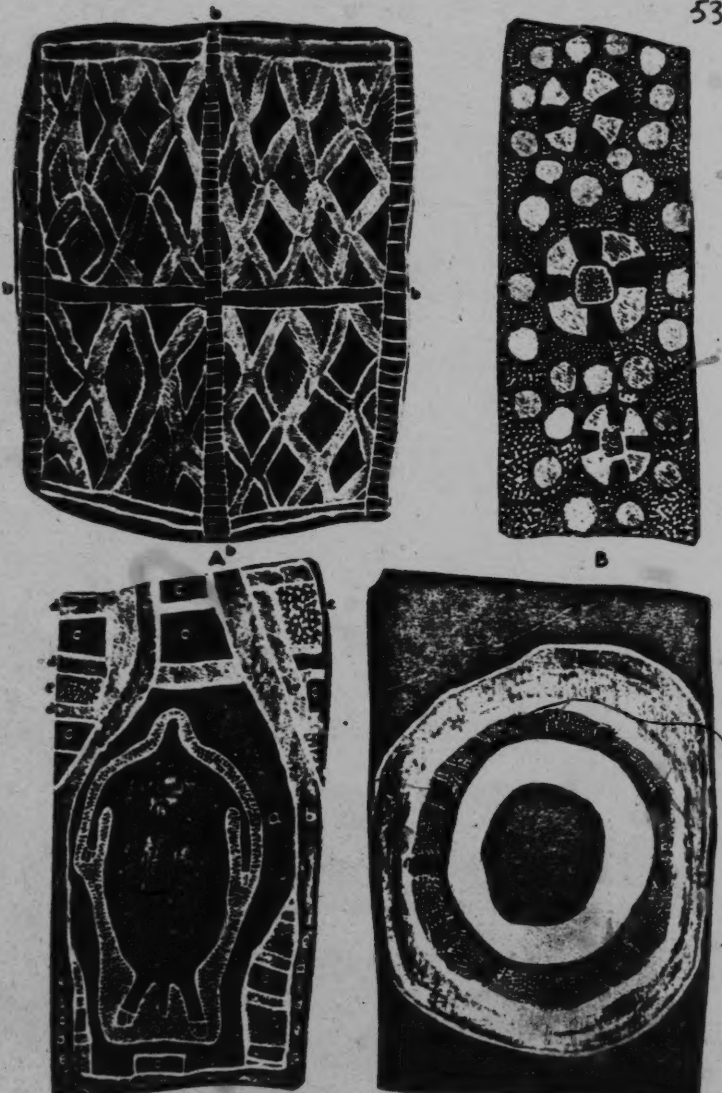

PLATE 12. *Bark Paintings of the Totemic Places*
A, Eucalyptus tree at Mandumpi; B, D, Red ochre at Numanira; C, Turtle at Jutapinta.

[p. 32 K]

x532

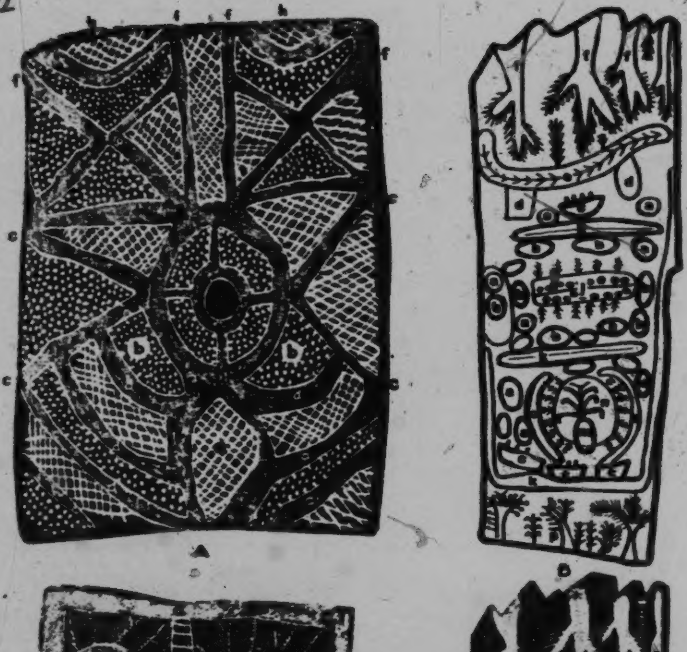

PLATE 13. *Bark Paintings of the Totemic Places*
A, C, Spider at Rungani; B, D, Eucalyptus tree at Alaparima.

[p. 32 L]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958

OI20 Tiwi OI20

532^x

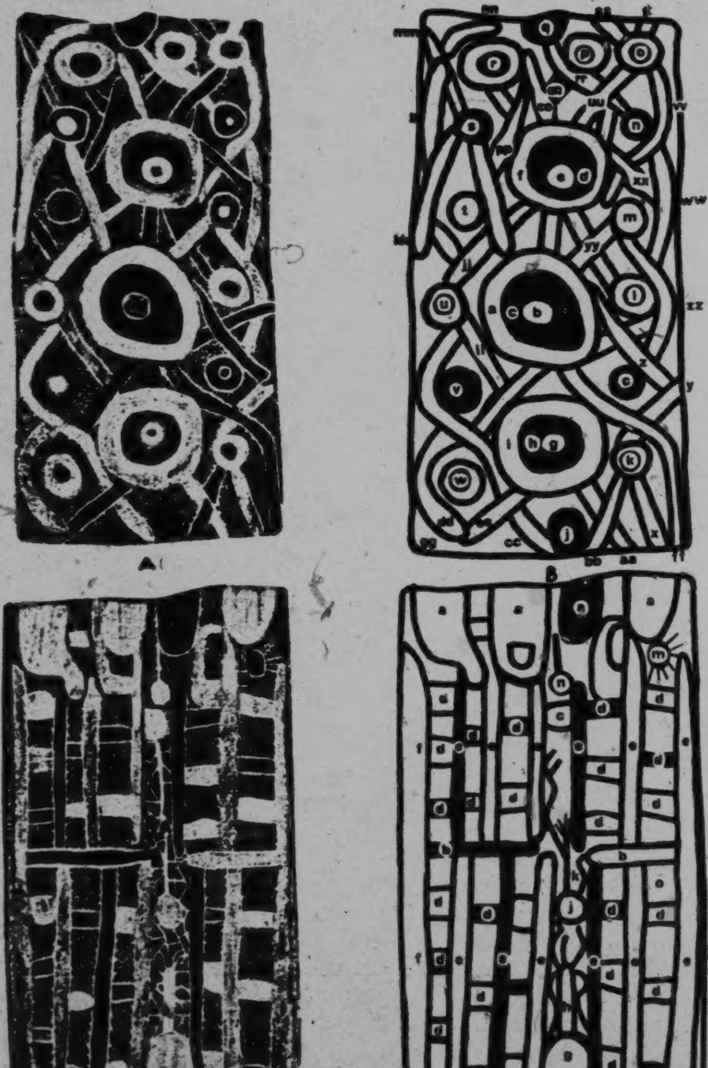

PLATE 14. *Bark Paintings of the Totemic Places*
A, B, Eucalyptus tree at Putawini; C, D, Eucalyptus tree at Patuapuru.

[p. 32 M]

×532

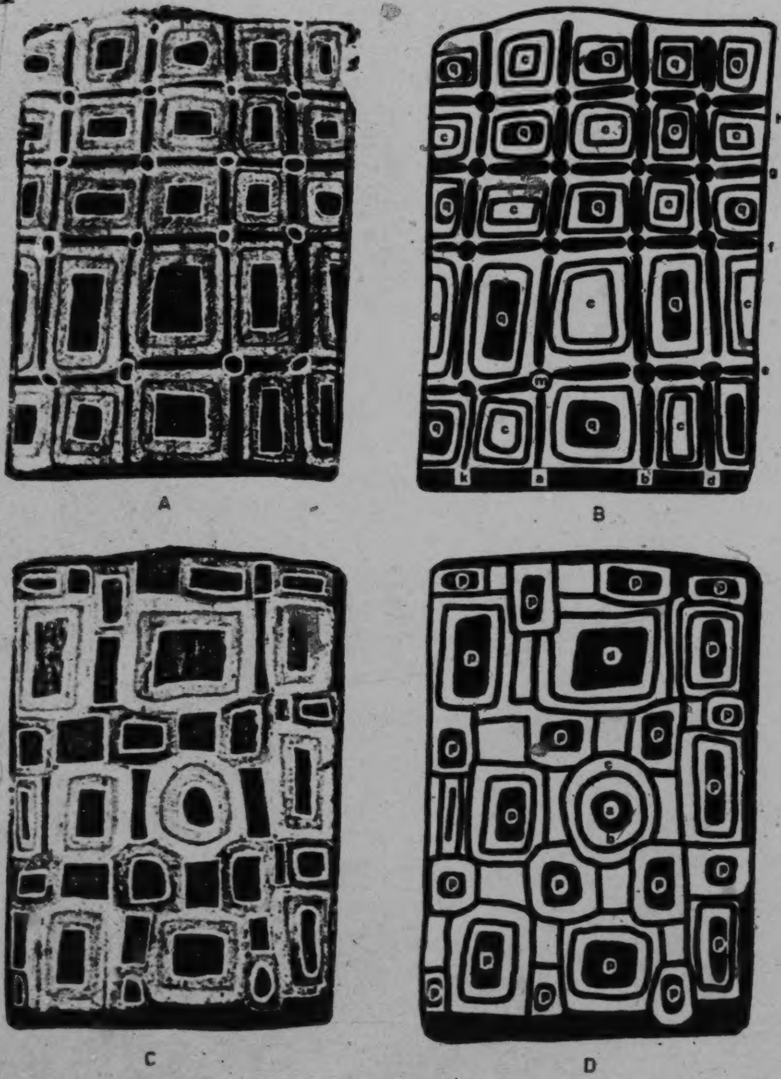
A
B
h
g
f
e
m
k
a
b
d
C
D
c
a
b

PLATE 15. *Bark Paintings of the Totemic Places*
A, B, C, D, Eucalyptus tree at Putawini.

[p. 32 N]

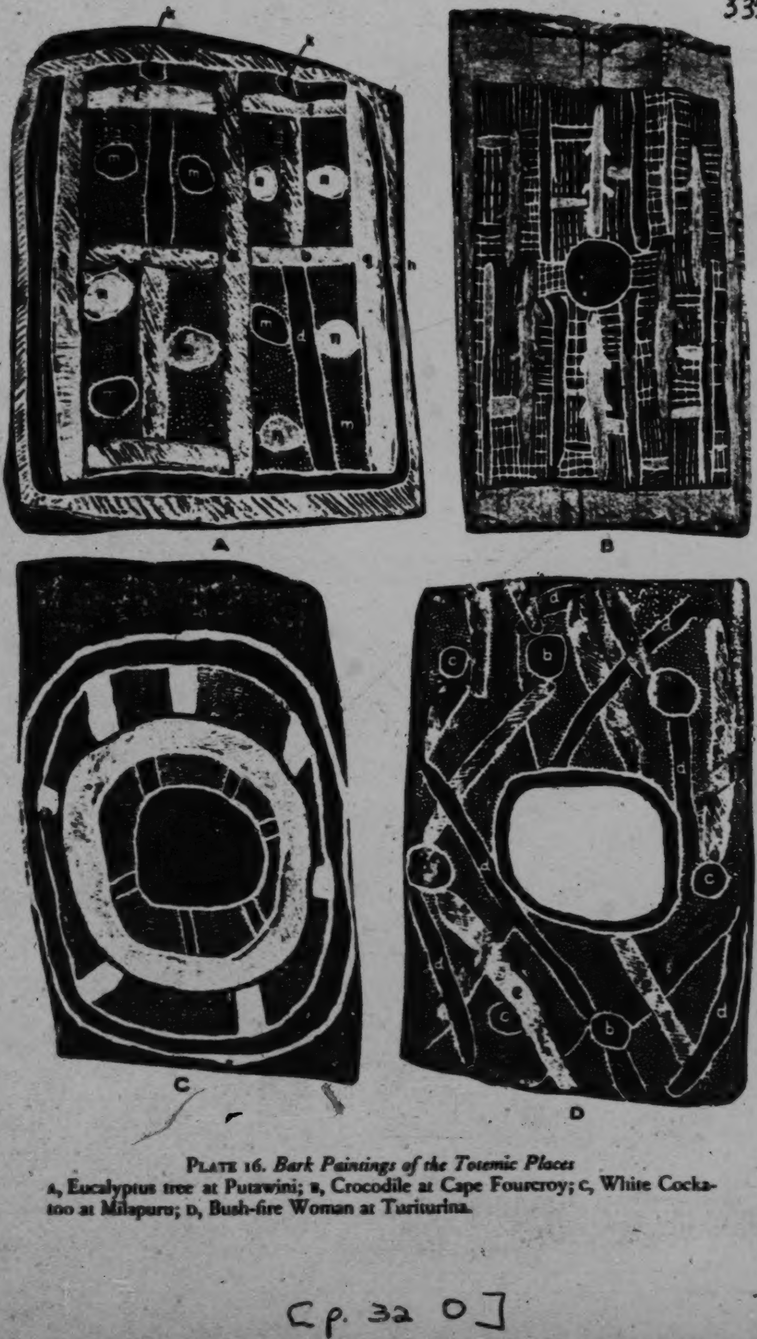

PLATE 16. *Bark Paintings of the Totemic Places*
A, Eucalyptus tree at Putawini; B, Crocodile at Cape Fourcroy; C, White Cockatoo at Milapuru; D, Bush-fire Woman at Turiturina.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958

OI20 Tiwi OI20

x532

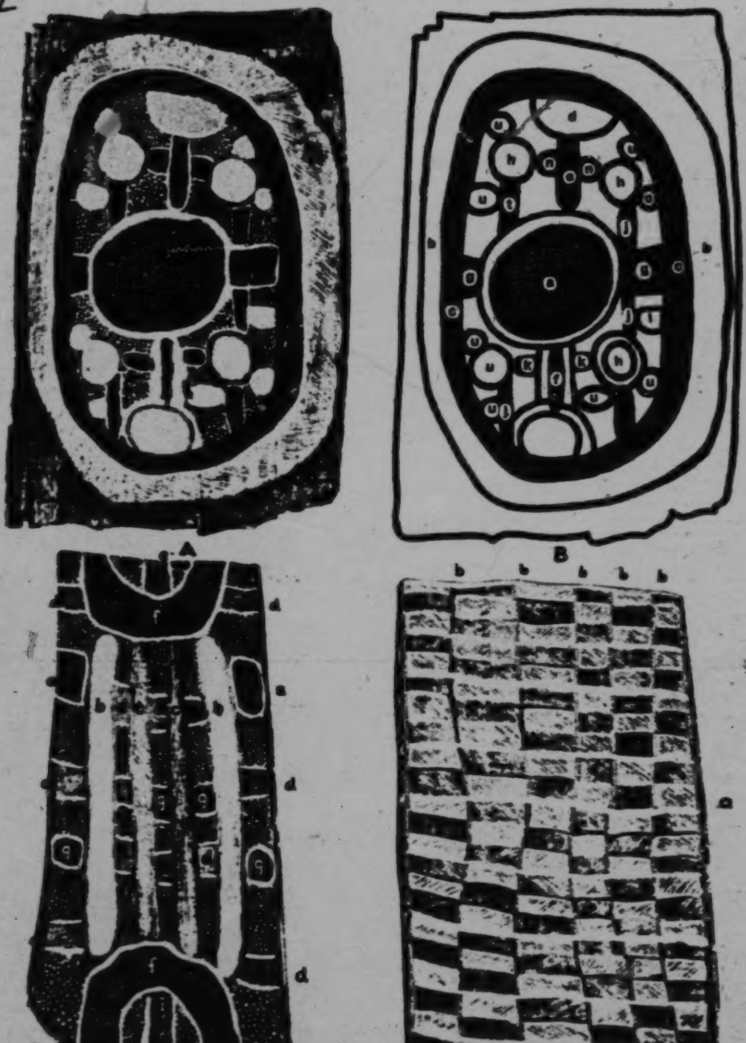
A
B
C
D
a
b
c
d
e
f
g
h
j
k
l
t
u

PLATE 17. *Bark Paintings of the Totemic Places*
A, B, Sand-fly, Murtinini; C, Sand-fly, Cape Fourcroy; D, Sand-fly, Taliau.

[p.32 P]

532x

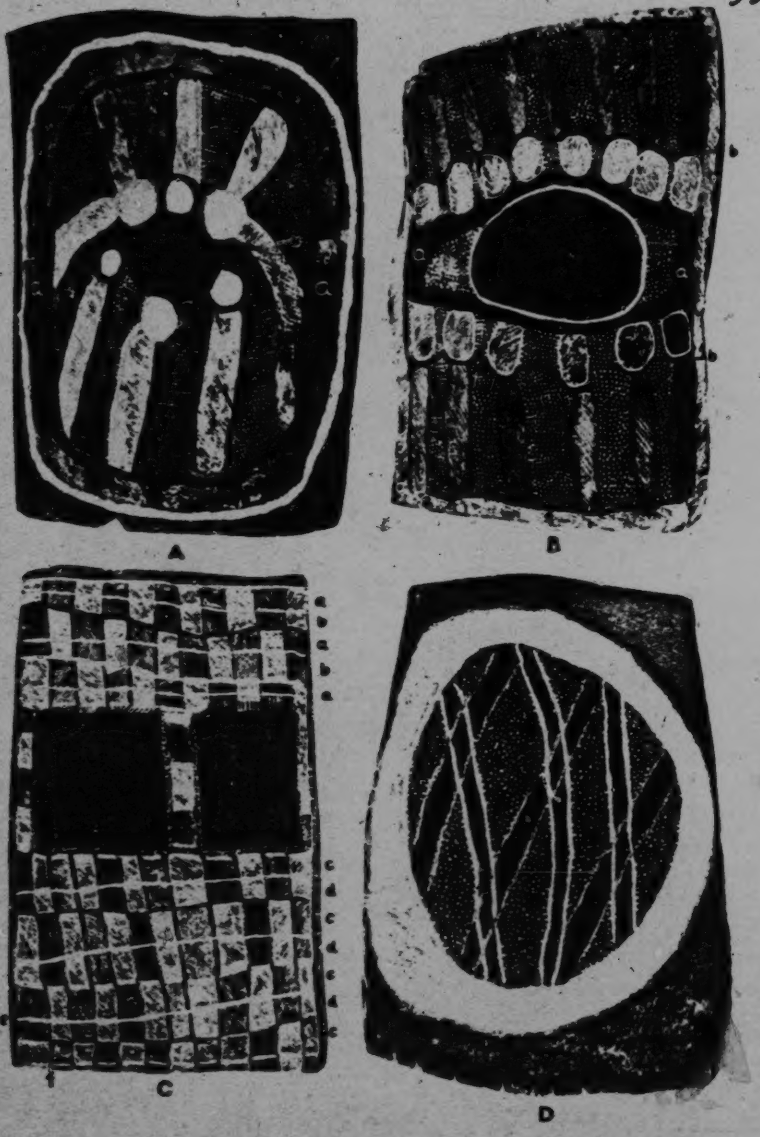

PLATE 18. *Bark Paintings of the Totemic Places*
A, Eucalyptus tree, Rulijunga; B, Pandanus tree, Primadua; C, March-fly, Kudjatumpi; D, Yam, Primadua.

[p. 32 9]

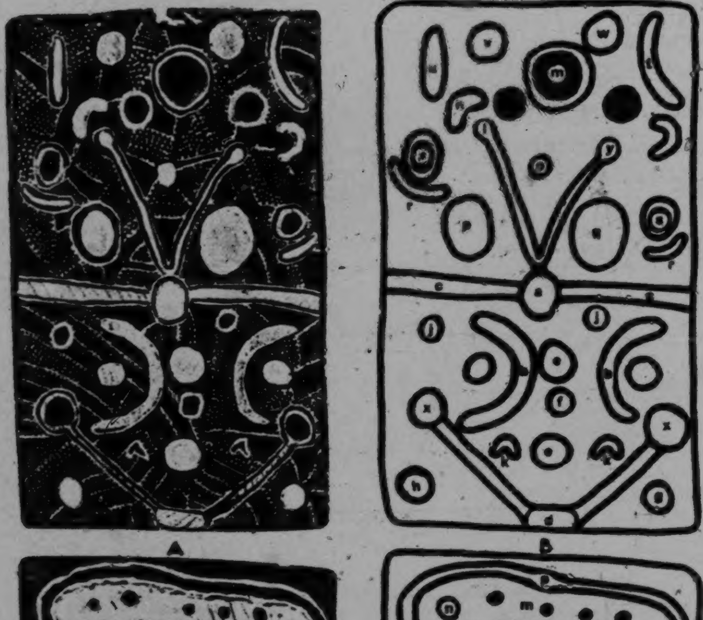

PLATE 19. *Bark Paintings of the Totemic Places*
A, B, Blow-fly, Muranapi and Waitbak; C, D, Eucalyptus tree, Buchanan Island.

[p. 32 R.]

532x

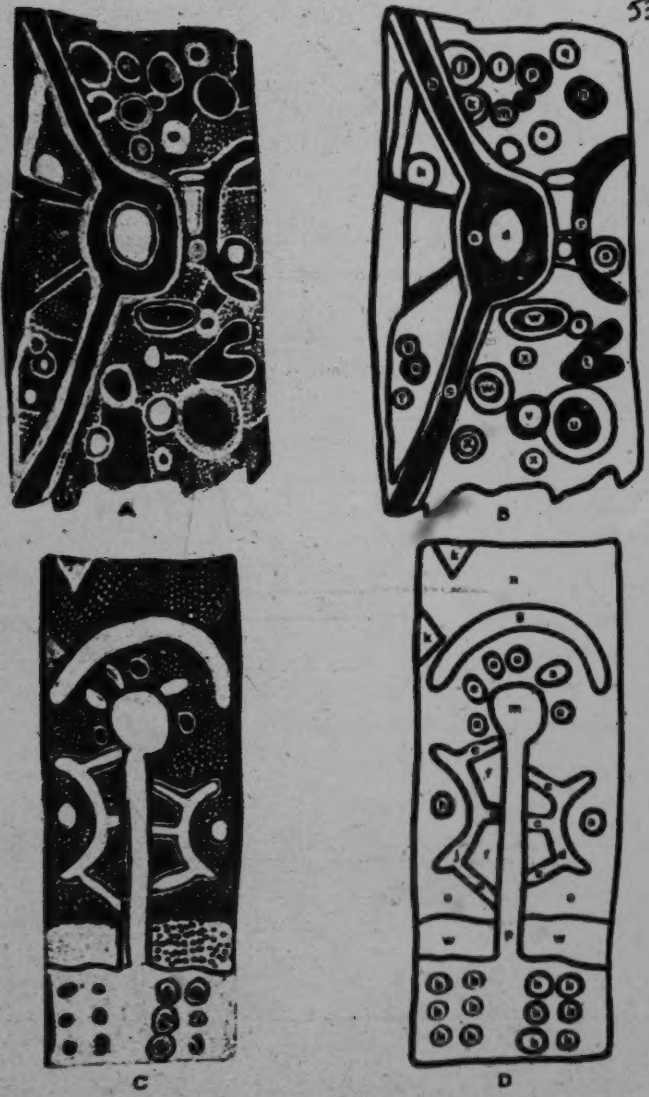

PLATE 20. *Bark Paintings of the Totemic Places*
A, B, Fork-tailed Kite, Arunumpi; C, D, Flying Fox and Bamboo, Muranapi.

[p. 32 5]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958

OI20 Tiwi OI20

×532

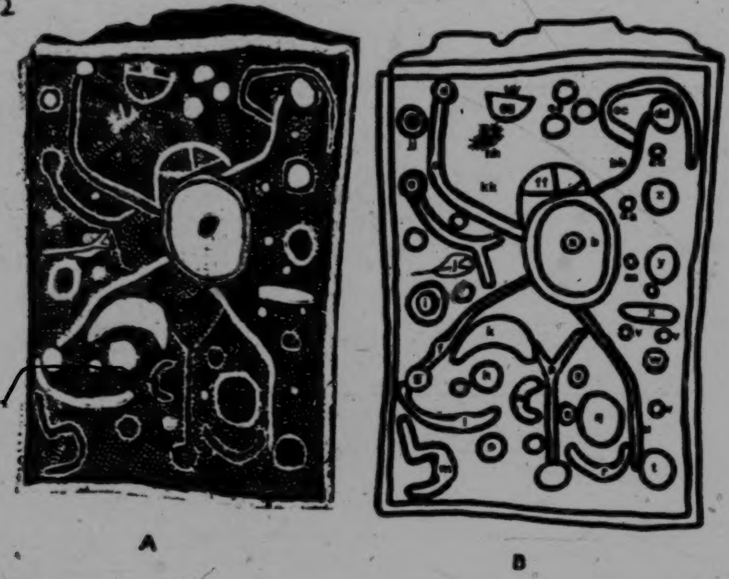

Plate 21. *Bark Paintings of the Totemic Places*
A, B, March-fly at Bonkaitji.

[p. 32 T]

The *pukamuni* poles, *tudinis*, *a*, *a*, etc., and *b*, *b*, etc., are now parallel reefs of stone[30] on the sea-coast at Impanali; circle *d*, is a ring of white sand encircling the death place of *Purukupali*; and *e*, a large boulder at Tapararimi, once a stone axe, which the "workers" had used to cut the *pukamuni* poles. 532 × 773 [823]

The remainder of the designs on the painting symbolize the people of creation times mourning for *Purukupali*. The dots *j*, *j*, on the ground of the painting, represent the coloured ochres on the body of the ceremonial leader, *Talinini*; the black rectangle, *g*, *Waia*, the mother-in-law of *Purukupali*; and *h*, *h*, two bird-women, *Pungatili* and *Makungdili*.

At *k* (left) is a honey-woman, *Imbara*, the sister of *Talinini*; *l* (upper left), her mother, *Latungkala*, who made a bark basket, and *m*, another honey-woman, *Irama*. *Mauwini* is at *n*, he, with *Talinini* and *Taparalili*, performed the first *ilania* at Biawururu, on central Bathurst Island. *Taparalili* is at *q*, and other honey-men, *Tupiringini* and *Maipuringa* are at *p* and *s*.

On Pl. 3C, the artist tried to show some of the decorations used in a *pukamuni* ceremony. The series of cross-hatched, more or less rectangular panels, at the top, represent the painted bark baskets which are left on the grave; the vertical panels at the bottom, lines of colour in the hair of the performers, and the groups of chevron designs, the scars on the bodies of the men and women. The horizontal band across the centre of the painting represents the hair belts of the men.

Pl. 3D and 3E are designs which, the artists told me, would be similar to those painted on the burial poles of *Purukupali*.

The artist of Pl. 3D did not give me the meaning of his design, but on Pl. 3E, the four barred panels, *a*, *a*, etc., represent native roads; the plain bands, *b*, *b*, etc., on either side, horizontal lines of clouds, the diagonal bands, in the upper and lower panels, native fig trees, and the cross-hatched diamond-shaped panels, spider webs on the trees.

Before the rituals at Tapararimi began, the fish-men engaged in a contest to prove who could throw their spears the furthest. *Pipinjawari* was the most skilled of them all, for, even though he stood behind the others, his spears still travelled the greatest distance. Wherever the spears landed, there are now large eucalyptus trees, the largest of them, called *Warukumbi*, being once the spear of *Pipinjawari*. But in winning the contest, the fish-man strained his spine so badly that parts of the vertebrae were forced through the skin. 773 [824]

At the conclusion of the rituals, it was the duty of *Pipinjawari* to pay the "workers" for the labour of cutting and painting the poles, and for making

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[30] Other informants state they are large trees. Probably both informants are correct.

773 the ceremonial baskets. But he did not fulfil his obligations. This breach of faith so infuriated the other fish-men that they chased him through the trees to spear him. Thinking to escape punishment, *Pipinjawari* jumped into the sea, and transformed himself into the queen fish. But the other men, also transforming themselves into fish, continued the chase. [825] Even now, on calm days, the aborigines often see *Pipinjawari*, with his broken back-bone now a dorsal fin, jumping out of the water to escape his pursuers.[34]

×532
773

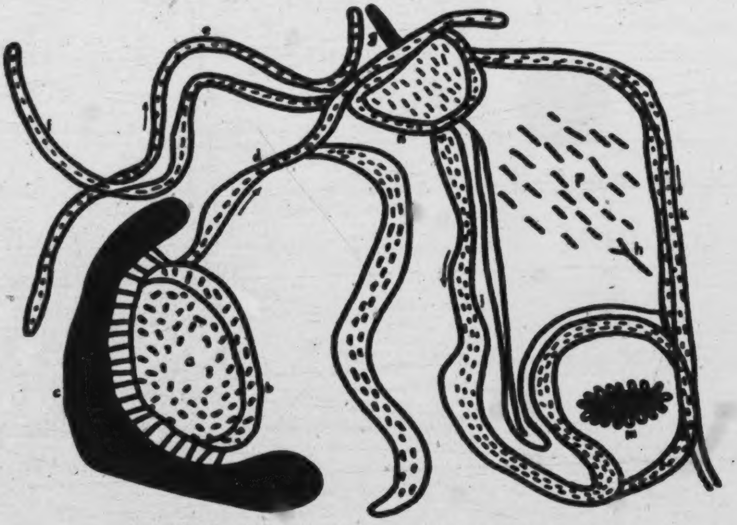

Fig. 3. *Spear-throwing Contest of Pipinjawari*

Fig. 3 is a crayon drawing of *Purukupali's pukamuni* and the spear-throwing contest of the fish-people.

On the lower left is Timbaranapi, where all the mythical people assembled to perform the last *ilania* before carrying out the final burial rituals.

At Timbaranapi, the men danced in the *milimika*, *a*, and the women on the outskirts at *b*. The radiating lines on the edge of the *milimika* are many baskets filled with food for the "workers" (Pl. 25B), and crescent *c*, the ground cleared by the "workers". The men travelled by path, *e*, and the

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[171] [34] This is the same fish as the *Tinimbu* of the aborigines of north-eastern Arnhem Land (Mountford 1956, p. 349).

women by *d*, to a place, *n*, where they painted one another for the final 532x
pukamani rituals. 773

Whilst there, the fish-men engaged in the spear-throwing contest mentioned in the myth.[28] Their footmarks are in circle, *n*, and the places where the spears fell at *p*. *Pipinjawari*, who stood behind the others at *g*, threw his spear the furthest, a large eucalyptus tree, *h*, being the transformed spear. The spears of the other fish-men at *p* are smaller eucalyptus trees.

When everyone had finished decorating themselves, both men and women moved to *m*, where the burial poles had been erected around the grave, the women again reaching their destination by a different path, *k*. It was at the completion of these rituals that the fish-men quarrelled with *Pipinjawari* because he refused to give the "workers" presents for their duties.

5. THE CLOSE OF THE CREATION PERIOD

The escape of *Pipinjawari*, which brought the *palaneri* (creation period) to a 773
close, was the signal for the mythical people to return to their camps and to transform themselves into the various birds, fish, reptiles, heavenly bodies and inanimate objects of today.

Tjapara, the moon-man, rose into the sky, his face and body deeply [821]
scarred with the wounds he had received in his quarrel with *Purukupali*. *Bima*, his lover, and the mother of the dead child, *Djinini*, still bearing the [825]
mark on her head where *Purukupali* had struck her with his throwing stick, became the curlew (*Numenius cyanopus*) which still roams the forest at night, wailing in remorse for her misdeeds and for the child she lost.

Wuriupranala, one of the daughters of the original creator, *Mudungkala*, changed herself into the sun-woman, who travels across the sky carrying the [821]
torch of blazing bark given to her by *Purukupali*. The *Maludaianini* men, with the ceremonial paint still on their bodies, became that sparkling galaxy, the Milky Way.

Tukimbini, the grandson of *Murupiangkala*, instructed the mythical people (many of whom were his wives and relatives), to establish a totemic place at their old camps on Melville and Bathurst Islands to create the aboriginal foods belonging to each place, and then to change themselves into the particular bird, reptile, fish or inanimate object with which that locality is now associated.

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[28] At a *pukamani* ceremony we witnessed at Melville Island, one of the Bathurst Islanders, *Jibungfiakumi*, impersonating *Pipinjawari*, threw sticks, as spears, over the men carrying the poles to the grave, chanting "*Kuniprok wanikali kurinari*", meaning "We throw spears to find out who goes furthest." [796]

773 However, before all these changes took place, *Tukimbini* assembled the mythical people who had attended *Purukupali's* ceremony, and taught them the rules of behaviour, and the laws of marriage and tribal relationship they must always obey. *Tukimbini* also laid down the periods of light and darkness that still determine the daily cycle of aboriginal life.

512 821 [825] When the first light appears in the morning sky it is the melodious call of *Tukimbini*, now the yellow-faced honey-eater (*Meliphaga chrysops*) that wakens the aborigines from their sleep.

The sun-woman, rising above the eastern horizon with her blazing torch, is a signal for the aboriginal men, with spears and wooden clubs, to go hunting, and for the women, with bark baskets hanging from the sticks over their shoulders, to gather their food from the forest and the swamplands.

About mid-day, the sun-woman, cooking the food she has gathered, makes the heat of the day unbearable. The aborigines then retire to the shade of the trees until the late afternoon when they continue their food gathering, returning to camp to cook their evening meal just as the sun-woman sinks below the western horizon.

Soon, darkness creeps across the sky, the stars, *tapalinga*, show themselves and the men of the Milky Way, the *Maludaianini*, span the heavens. It is then [512] that the dried perspiration which the *Maludaianini* rub from their bodies, falls on the eyelids of the aborigines, making them so heavy that they cannot keep awake. Next morning, at dawn, *Tukimbini* wakes the aborigines to a new day.

776 778 The following is the list of the totemic places of Melville and Bathurst Islands, illustrated by bark paintings, the names of the totemic people and their relationships to each other.

Locality	*Totem*	*Relationship*
Murupianga	Tukimbini (bird)	Great-grandson of *Mudungkala*
Wuriupi	Garagalani (turtle)	Not known
	Wuriupranala (sun)	Daughter of *Mudungkala*
Panindu	Paninduela (eucalyptus tree)	Wife of *Tukimbini*
Wailu	Andjalui (fresh water)	Husband of *Wuriupranala*
	Kwouk-kwouk (frog)	Not known

776
778

Locality	*Totem*	*Relationship*
	Pakadringa (thunderstorms)	Son of *Kwouk-kwouk*
	Tomituka (monsoon rain)	Daughter of *Kwouk-kwouk*
	Bumerali (lightning)	Daughter of *Kwouk-kwouk*
Pirilou	Piriloukala (catfish)	Wife of *Tukimbini*
Arangu	Wuringa (fish)	Wife of *Tukimbini*
Jumpiona	Ringa (turtle)	Not known
Wilindu	Wilinduela (crocodile)	Sister of *Tukimbini*
Numanira	Numanirakala (red ochre)	Sister of *Tukimbini*
Rungani	Baraka (spider)	Wife of *Tukimbini*
Alaparima	Imburai-inga (eucalyptus tree)	Not known
Mandumpi	Timarai-inga (eucalyptus tree)	Not known
Patuaparu	Pungulu (eucalyptus tree)	Not known
Putarwini Puntubu	Aragoutourina (eucalyptus tree)	Wife of *Tukimbini*
Matingalia	Matingalia (eucalyptus tree)	Not known
Turiturina	Puruliangkala (bush fire)	Wife of *Tukimbini*
Murninini Cape Fourcroy Talimu	Mandubuka (sand-fly)	Wife of *Tukimbini*
Milapuru	Milapukala (cockatoo)	Not known
Primadua	Miatrina (pandanus tree)	Wife of *Tukimbini*
Primadua	Tililindigia (yam)	Not known
Primadua	Ubuna (yam)	Not known
Mungunu	Inkaka (cockatoo)	Not known
Jurubulinai	Mudungkala (eucalyptus tree)	Wife of *Tukimbini*
Rulijunga	Mantinuria (eucalyptus tree)	Wife of *Tukimbini*
Arunumpi	Mudati (kite)	Not known
Muranapi	Murungimpili (flying fox)	Not known
Muranapi	Kaialili (bamboo)	Not known[26]
Muranapi	Mandubuka (blow fly)	Wife of *Tukimbini*
Kudjatumpi	March-fly (Kudjatumpi)	Wife of *Tukimbini*

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[26] There is little doubt that most, if not all, of the totemic women whose relationships I did not find out, would have been wives or relatives of *Tukimbini*.

6. THE BARK PAINTINGS OF THE TOTEMIC PLACES

x532 778 [115] The aborigines of Melville Island produced forty-five bark paintings dealing with the totemic localities of Melville and Bathurst Islands. The assistance of the two aboriginal artists, *Tjamalampua* and *Malumerinita*, and Mr. W. E. Harney, who had spent many years on the islands, coupled with the aboriginal names on the official map of Melville and Bathurst Islands, and my increasing knowledge, enabled me to locate the approximate position of twenty-five totemic areas associated with the bark paintings.

The Honey-eater Bird-man, Tukimbini, at Murupianga

Four bark paintings deal with the myth of *Tukimbini* and the totem place he created at Murupianga, south-eastern Melville Island; Pl. 4A, B; Pl. 4C, D; Pl. 6C, D; Pl. 7A.

The circle *a*, on Pl. 4A, B, is a mangrove swamp on a low island adjacent to Murupianga, *b*, *b*, and *p*, *p*, *p*, being rocks on its shore. The long sandy beach at Murupianga is shown at *d*, and a shoal at *j*. At *e* is a stingray, *h*, a dugong, *k*, a turtle, and *l*, a diamond fish. At *f*, *f*, etc., are piles of dead leaves on the beach, and at *o*, *o*, *o*, and similar designs, stringy-bark trees growing along the shore. A freshwater spring is at *t*, with two trees growing from its banks. Bunches of sea-weed are at *g*, and *r*, *r*, *r*, and at *s*, on the left-hand side of the painting, are the tree-covered uplands at Murupianga. The totemic place, Wuriupi, created by the woman, *Wuriupranala*, and her son, is at *m*.

On Pl. 4C, D, a jungle near the shore at Murupianga,[87] is indicated by the central black disc, *g*, and the camps of the bird-man, *Tukimbini*, are shown by the symbols, *a*, *a*, etc. The circle, *d*, *d*, pictures high, white cliffs, adjacent to the totemic jungle; *k*, is a monsoon forest tree, and *f*, *f*, its limbs; at *h*, *h*, are living paper-bark trees, at *b*, *b*, *b*, dead jungle trees; and at *c*, *c*, etc., poisonous yams, similar to the *kulama* (Pl. 44D), which *Tukimbini* created for food. The dots on the painting indicate the red seeds of a jungle vine lying on the ground.

Pl. 6C, D, is one side of a *pukamuni* basket;[88] the holes at *a*, *a*, show that it is a female basket.

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[87] In the companion bark painting, Pl. 4A, B, the totemic place is a mangrove swamp. Within the same area, as with *Mundubuku*, south-western Bathurst Island, several adjacent localities are associated with the same totemic being.

[114] [88] Klaatsch (1907), p. 577, who saw this type of basket on an old grave, states that, according to the aborigines, it indicated the burial place of a woman. Though it may be that Klaatsch was correct, my informants simply referred to the *pukamuni* baskets as male and female, as they did to male and female *pukamuni* spears (Pl. 32A, B). No female baskets were used at the *pukamuni* of the woman, *Makapini*.

Circle *y*, pictures the totem place of *Tukimbini* at Murupianga; *w*, a man- 532x
grove swamp not far from the coastline; circle *t*, a cliff with sand at its base 778
(probably on the sea shore); and circles *f*, *j*, and *z* are the open sea. Circle *g* pictures a submerged reef at Murupianga; *d*, *d*, are two sandbanks off the shore, and *h*, *k*, patches of jungle on the land. At *c*, *c*, etc., are the sandy shores; at *b*, *b*, etc., the lines of driftwood and debris cast upon them, while the cross-hatched background represents the tracks made in the soft sand by the hermit crabs.

Pl. 7A deals with *Tukimbini* and his many wives at Murupianga during the *palaneri* (creation) period.

The central figure is *Tukimbini*, the circles on either side of his face indicating the yellow ornaments he wore while he was a man. When later, he transformed himself into the yellow-faced honey-eater (*Meliphaga chrysops*) he still retained those decorations. *Tukimbini's* penis is at *b*. The white oval, *c*, is his paper-bark shelter, the black oval, *e*, being the bough shed he built over the shelter to make it cooler. His camp fires, on either side of him, are at *d*, *d*, etc., and those of three of his wives at *n*, *n*, *n*.

The eight circles, *g*, *g*, etc., represent some of the wives of *Tukimbini*. Within the white circle, the dots, *c*, indicate *Tukimbini's* grass bed, and those over the remainder of the painting, the beds of his wives. The outer white circle, *m*, symbolizes the high ground at Murupianga.

The Hawk-bill Turtle-woman, Garagalani, at Wuriupi

The hawk-bill turtle-woman, *Garagalani*, and her husband, *Marakuni*, in 773
company with the crocodile-man, *Jirakupai*, the wild honey-man, *Mauwini*, and many others, took part in the *pukamuni* of *Purukupali*. It was the duty of *Garagalani* and the other turtle-women, to make the large folded bark baskets, and for their husbands to decorate them.

At the close of the creation period, when *Garagalani* and the other turtle-women were transformed into sea creatures, the baskets became their carapaces, and the painted designs on the baskets, the shell pattern on their backs.

Pl. 8A, B, two sides of a *pukamuni* basket, refers to the turtle-woman, 532x
Garagalani. On B, the circular designs symbolize turtle eggs; the vertical 773
bands, lengths of turtle rope, made from fibrous bark, and the cross-hatched areas, patches of sea-grass, the food of the turtles.

On the opposite side of the basket, Pl. 8A, the bands refer to the turtle rope, while the cross-hatching is the sea-grass.

532 773 [124] Although, in the interpretation of the paintings on this basket, gathered in the early days of the expedition, the designs were not given topographical meanings, there is little doubt that fuller inquiries would have shown that the designs and the topography were linked.

On Pl. 8c, D, *e*, pictures the body of the turtle-woman, *a*, *a*, being the front flippers, *d*, *d*, the hind flippers, *b*, the carapace, *g*, the head, and *e*, *e*, *e*, etc., the bones of the creature; the dotted background, *f*, represents the marks on the tortoise-shell of the carapace.

The Sun-woman, Wuriupranala, at Wuriupi

821 773 Every morning, the sun-woman, *Wuriupranala*,[29] climbs a high mountain in the east, and, carrying her blazing torch of bark, travels across the sky, parallel to the earth. Sometimes, the sun-woman, to please her husband, powders her body with red ochre, the dust of which, flying into the sky, rdedens the early morning clouds.

On reaching the western horizon the sun-woman extinguishes her bark torch, and, by the light from its glowing end, finds her way back to the east through the underground world, Ilara.[30] But, before setting out on that journey, *Wuriupranala* again decorates herself with powdered ochres thereby colouring both the western sky and the clouds.

532 773 Nine bark paintings, i.e. Pls. 5A, B, C, D, 6A, B, 7B, C, D, illustrate the sun-woman, *Wuriupranala*, and the topography of Wuriupi. The remainder of the paintings dealing with the sun are described under Astronomy, Chapter 7.

Pl. 5A is a painting on a small bark basket, which deals with the myth of the sun-woman, *Wuriupranala*.

The circle in the centre of each disc, of which there are sixteen, symbolizes the sun-woman, the radiating lines being the rays of light at sunrise and sunset. The three wide vertical bands represent the track of the sun-woman as she moves across the sky, and the lines, linking the discs, the path in the underground world, Ilara, along which *Wuriupranala* returns to the east. The cross-hatched areas are rain, the dots, stars (*tapalinga*), and the short parallel lines, top and bottom, rain falling from the clouds.

The central dot on Pl. 5B, is the "eye" of the sun-woman seated in her paper-bark hut (the inner circle). The five radiating lines within the circle are the posts of her hut, the cross-hatching is her hair, and the five outer concentric circles are her hair-string belts.

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[29] In one bark painting, Pl. 60A, B, *Wuriupranala* and *Murupianghala* alternately travel across the sky. This is the only time that *Murupianghala* was referred to as a sun-woman.

[30] The moon returns to the east by a similar road.

The vertical lines at the bottom of the painting symbolize the rays of the 532x
sun-woman as she rises in the east, and the groups of dots throughout the 773
design, the stars, *tapalinga*, in the night sky.

On Pl. 5C, D, the two concentric circles, *d*, indicate the surface, while *a*, is the *imunka*,[81] or life centre of the sun.

The painting shows a number of different clouds; a thin misty cloud at *b*, heavy rain clouds which temporarily obscure the sun at *h*, *h*, *h*, etc., a mackerel sky at *c* (indicated by the short radiating lines), and cumulus clouds at *j*, *j*.

The colours of sunrise and sunset are indicated by the horizontal bands, *g*, *g*; while the lines of light, which sometimes radiate from the sunset, are at *e*, *e*, etc., and those from the sunrise at *f*, *f*, etc.

Pl. 6A, B, is a bark painting of Wuriupi, the totem place of *Wuriupranala*, 532x
the sun-woman. Her body, now a patch of jungle, is at *a*; her head at *n*, and 778
her abdomen at *k*. Her arms are at *b*, *b*; her legs at *c*, *c*; her breasts at *j*, *j*; her ears at *m*, *m*; the chevron scars on her arms and back at *e*, *e*, etc.

The windbreak of her camp, *d*, is a sandy beach at Wuriupi, and the shelter, under which she rested, is a large yam, whose leaves, vine and blossoms, are indicated by symbols, *h*, *h*; *l*, *l*; *v*, *v*, etc. Tracks made by the sun-woman are shown at *x*, *x*; *x*, *x*; red rocks on the beach at *g*, *g*; and black rocks at *f*, *f*.

Pl. 7B, a painting on one side of a *pukamuni* basket, also refers to the sun- 532x
woman. 821

The sun is represented by the black circle in the lower section of the design, while the disc in the centre of the circle is the torch of blazing bark which the sun-woman carries across the sky to provide the world with light and heat. The white, upper disc represents the large thunderclouds which, at the beginning of the wet season, often obscure the sun.[82] The surrounding concentric circles and the parallel lines across the middle of the design symbolize the colours on the edge of the clouds at sunrise or sunset.

The lighter coloured diagonal lines refer to groups of cirrus clouds, and the darker, to monsoon clouds of the rainy season. The dots are the stars of the night sky.

The vertical black line in the middle of Pl. 7D, is the track across the sky of the sun-woman, *Wuriupranala*. The black disc across the bottom is the sun in the morning; the one immediately above, the sun at midday; the next,

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[81] The *imunka* is a universal life essence which permeates all living things, the plants, [774]
the creatures and man. It is situated in the solar-plexus of man. This is the same life
essence as that of the Pitjendadjara tribe of the western deserts of Central Australia [171]
(Mountford, 1948, p. 111).

[82] When a thundercloud obscures the sun, the aborigines believe that *Andjalui* (fresh water) has taken his wife, *Wuriupranala*, to his camp.

×532 the sun at mid-afternoon, and the disc on the upper edge, *Wuriupranala* at
821 sunset.

The lighter coloured radiating bands are the lines of light from the blazing bark torch, carried by the sun-woman; the dark-coloured ovals between, a number of *tukimbinis* (yellow-eared honey-eaters), and the lighter coloured ovals, a number of *wuriuprinilis* (mistletoe birds).

In the centre of Pl. 7C, is the sun-woman, *Wuriupranala*, seated in her bark hut at Wuriupi, The central dark mark on her abdomen indicates body paint; the white lines, *a*, *a*, are her legs, *b*, *b*, her feet and *e*, *e*, her arms.

The dark-coloured oval, *g*, is the sun-woman's paper-bark hut; the light-coloured outer circle, *d*, is a bough shed built over the hut to keep it cool, and the short radiating lines between the two circles, the posts supporting the roof.

The Eucalyptus-tree Woman, Panindurla, at Panindu

773 The eucalyptus-tree woman, *Panindurla*, created the totemic country of Panindu, north-eastern Melville Island, the streams, fish, turtles, geese and other creatures, as well as water-lilies, spike-rushes and other plants that grow in the freshwater swamps.

778 Panindu is on the upper reaches of an unnamed river in north-eastern Melville Island; Wailu, the totemic place of the freshwater-man, *Andjalui*, is at the mouth of the same stream.

×532
778 On Pl. 9A, B, *a*, *a*, are the Panindu waterholes; *b*, *b*, waterfalls which flow from upper to lower pools; and *e*, *e*, are lines of foam caused by the falling water. At *t*, *t*, etc., are *pubiaka*, and *u*, *u*, etc., paper-bark trees on the banks of the stream, and at *h*, *h*, and *j*, *j*, dead *pubiaka* and paper-bark trees lying in the water.

Two lagoons, or backwaters, are indicated at *c*, *c*; two sedge-covered swamps at *f*, *g*. Water-grass on the bottom of the swamp is shown by the cross-hatched areas, *s*, *s*.

The Freshwater-man, Andjalui

778
776 The totem place of the freshwater-man, *Andjalui*, is at Wailu, north-eastern Melville Island. At Wailu there also lived the frog-woman, *Kwouk-kwouk*,[22] her son, *Pakadringa*, the man of the thunderstorms, and her two daughters, *Tomituka*, the woman of the monsoon rains, and *Bumerali*, the woman of the lightning.

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[22] Some aborigines thought, but were not sure, that *Andjalui* was the husband of both *Kwouk-kwouk*, and the sun-woman, *Wuriupranala*.

Five bark paintings, Pls. 9C, D, 10B, D, 22A, B, and 58B, deal with Wailu 532x
and its inhabitants. 778

On Pl. 9C, D, the totemic lagoon, Wailu, is at *a*, the outer circle, *b*, symbolizing the broken water of the stream, *f* (in circle above) as it runs over the stony bed of a watercourse into Wailu. At *d*, *d*, are the paper-bark and *e*, *e*, *pubiaka* trees which grow on its banks.

At *j*, *j* (below), and *s*, *s*, etc., are living paper-bark, and *m*, *m*, and *p*, *p*, etc., *pubiaka* trees on the bank; *n*, *n*, are dead paper-bark and *o*, *o*, *pubiaka* trees in the swamp. The cross-hatched areas throughout the painting symbolize watergrass on the bottom of the lagoon.

Pl. 58B, which is associated with Wailu, deals with the rainbow-woman, 532x
Maratji, the thunderstorm-man, *Pakadringa*, and the monsoon rain-woman, 776
Tomituka.

The four black horizontal bands represent the dark-coloured clouds of *Tomituka* (monsoon rain); the lighter-coloured chevrons indicate large cumulus clouds, the home of the man of the thunderstorms, *Pakadringa*; and the darker chevrons are the rainbow-women, *Maratjis*, who live at Maundu.

The Frog-Woman, Kwouk-kwouk, at Wailu

The frog-woman, *Kwouk-kwouk*, lives with her family, *Pakadringa*, *Tomi*- 776
tuka, and *Bumerali*, at Wailu, the totem place of *Andjalui*. 778

The three children of *Kwouk-kwouk* always obey their mother, so when, 821
in the wet season, the rain falls and thunderstorms rage, she croaks with joy 825
over their handiwork. No aboriginal would dare to kill a frog; if he were so
foolish, her son, *Pakadringa*, and daughter, *Tomituka*, would send down so
much rain that everyone would be drowned.

Pl. 10B deals with the frogs at Wailu. The central black oval is the lagoon at 532x
Wailu. At *a*, *a*, are large paper-bark trees which grow in Wailu lagoon, and 778
at *b*, *b*, another species of paper-bark which prefers the drier conditions of the
banks. The frogs, which live in the lagoon, are indicated at *c*, *c*, etc.; a water-
lily swamp is shown at *d*, *d*, and the white, broken water, running over fallen
trees, at *e*, *e*. The groups of dots represent the water-grass, and the faint lines
separating them, small streams of running water in an adjacent swamp.

Pakadringa, Bumerali and Tomituka at Wailu

During creation times, before *Pakadringa* was transformed into the man of 776
the thunderstorms, he was a hairy giant, huge in size, and repulsive in appear-

776 ance, with a long black body, short, thick legs and arms, and a pendant abdomen, caused by continuous over-eating.

Pakadringa, with his sister, *Bumerali*, the lightning-woman, her husband, *Kilipatu*, and their many children travel together in the thunderclouds.

776 821 *Bumerali*, the lightning woman, has flaked stone axes, called *rikas*,[24] mounted on long crooked handles, which she carries in either hand. With these, while travelling in the clouds with *Pakadringa*, she strikes the ground beneath, destroying the trees and sometimes the aborigines.[25] *Bumerali* becomes angry when her children jump from cloud to cloud. The sharp crack of the thunder which immediately follows the lightning flash is the voice of *Bumerali*[26] reprimanding her children for their disobedience.

Tomituka, *Pakadringa's* other sister, is the woman of the monsoon rain. At the start of the wet season, the trees and plants become happy when they hear the distant rumblings of *Pakadringa* for they know that *Tomituka* comes with him, bringing rain for their thirsty roots.

×532 776 821 Pl. 10D illustrates the mythical *Pakadringa*, the man of the thunderstorms. The black central oval and the semi-circles at the top and bottom of the painting are the dark-coloured thunderclouds of *Pakadringa*. At *b*, *b*, etc., are white thunderclouds, and *c*, *c*, etc., red-coloured clouds which appear in the sky after a storm has passed. The designs *a*, *a*, etc., indicate the rainbow-women, *Maratji* (p. 154), and the dots on the background, the falling rain.

Pl. 22A, B, deals with the lightning woman, *Bumerali*. Her eyes are indicated at *a*, *a*; her breasts at *d*, *d*; her feet at *f*, *f*; her camps at *k*, *k*; and her nose is at *b*.

The crooked handles of her stone axes are at *c*, *c*, and the "road" of the lightning (the flash) is at *e*.

The upper crescent, *g*, is the thundercloud in which *Bumerali* and her family travel; *h*, a yellow cloud which forms after the storm has passed, *s*, *s*, *s*, are stringy-bark trees, and *n*, *n*, other trees killed by *Bumerali's* axe;

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[24] Some of my informants said that the axes of *Bumerali* were made of a white stone which she had picked up at Moonga Hill, north of Turiturina, western Bathurst Island, where, I was told, there is an outcrop of quartz. Others said she made the axes from a white stone found in the upper world, Tuniruna, p. 171.

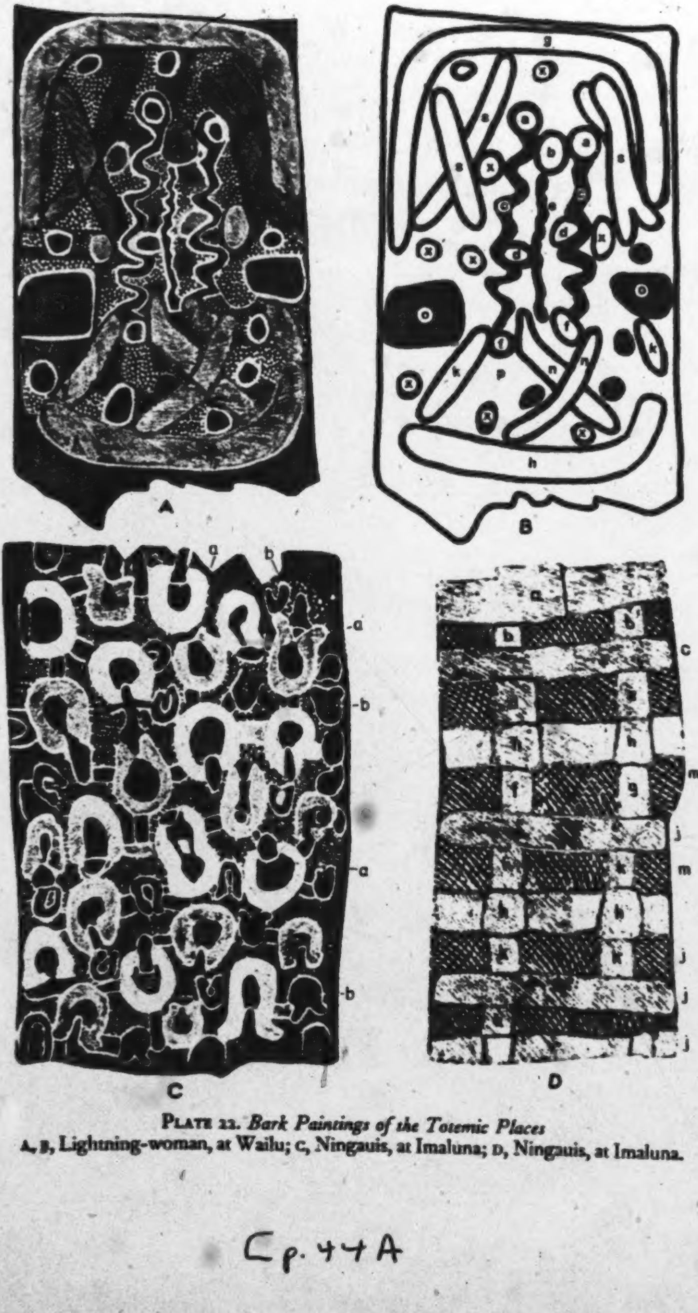
[171] [25] There is a widespread belief throughout Europe, Asia, Africa and some of the Indonesian Islands, that the prehistoric stone axes, found by the peasant people, were thunderbolts (Mountford, 1955, p. 1). At Oenpelli (Mountford, 1956, p. 208) a lightning man, *Mamaragan*, carries stone axes on his hands and knees. With these axes he strikes the ground. It is of some interest to find the myth of such a widespread belief among the Australian aborigines.

[26] The aborigines distinguish between the sharp crack of thunder (the voice of *Bumerali*) and the rumble of distant thunder, that of *Pakadringa*.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958

OI20 Tiwi OI20

x532


A
B
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m
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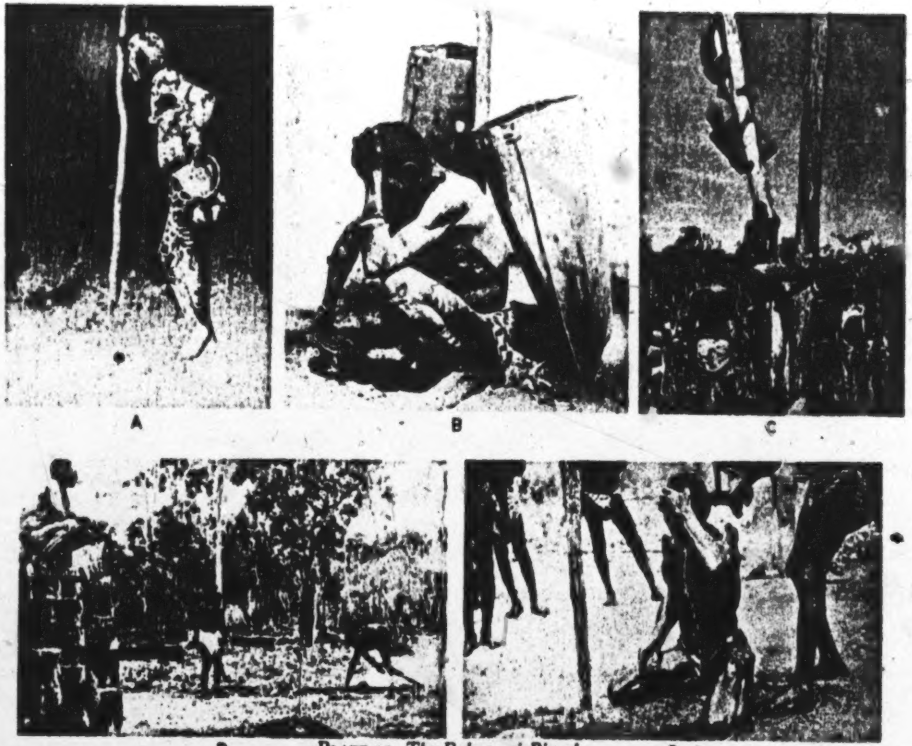
PLATE 22. *Bark Paintings of the Totemic Places*
A, B, Lightning-woman, at Wailu; C, Ningauis, at Imaluna; D, Ningauis, at Imaluna.

Cp. 44A

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

902
516
764

[p.44 b]



A B C D E

PLATE 23. *The Pukamuni Rituals*

A, Pulanimbuwi decorated for Burial Rituals; B, Pulanimbuwi mourning; C, Rite of Wandiatapinda; D, Final Scene at Grave; E, Pulanimbuwi being washed.

a, *a* (the black areas), indicate stony hills near her camp in the upper world; 532 x
and the dots on the background, the stars, *tapalingas*, which live in the upper 821
world with the lightning woman. 776

The Cat-fish Women, Piriloukala at Pirilou

Pirilou, on the upper Goose Creek swamps, is the totemic place of a mythical 778
cat-fish woman, *Piriloukala*. She was sent by *Tukimbini* to create both the 776
totemic country and the food necessary for the natives to live on it, i.e., [262]
geese, brolgas, ducks, freshwater goannas, turtles, waterlily bulbs, red and white fruited *Eugenia* trees, and the various kinds of yams that prefer the damp soil.

On Pl. 10c, the darker crossed circles are the black, and the lighter, the 532 x
white rocks at Pirilou. Panels, such as *a*, symbolize the trunks of the paper- 778
bark trees growing in the swamp; *b*, the many waterlilies on its surface, and the white vertical lines on the background, streams of fresh water in the swamp-lands.

The Fish-woman, Wuringa, at Arangu

Tukimbini sent the fish-woman, *Wuringa*, to establish a camp at Arangu, in 773
Curtis Haven, northern Melville Island. Later, *Wuringa's* camp was trans- [778]
formed into a group of flat rocks which are uncovered only at low tide.

Wuringa created the aboriginal foods of the area, turtles, crabs, fish of all kinds, yams, cabbage palms and hives of wild honey.

Two bark paintings illustrate Arangu and its surroundings, Pl. 11c and 532 x
Pl. 11d. 778

On Pl. 11c, *a*, is a long submerged reef at Arangu; *d*, *d*, *d*, smaller submerged rocks; *b*, *c*, long sand-bars, while at *e*, *e*, are jelly fish. The remainder of the ovals are oysters on the rocks at Arangu.

On Pl. 11d, *a*, is the totemic place, Arangu; *b*, represents the soft friable boulders near by; *c*, a large rock on the coast; *d*, wave breaking over it; *h*, white sand on the beach, and *j*, the sand and gravel on the sea bottom.

Symbol *e*, indicates black trepang; *f*, *f*, white trepang; *r*, an especially large trepang; *n*, a jelly fish, and *m*, a bed of oysters. At *k*, are many pearl shells, and at *s*, *s*, conch shells. A deep channel in Curtis Haven is indicated at *p*, a yellow rock under the water, at *o*, and the seaweed growing on the rocks at Arangu, by the lighter-coloured dots on the background.

The Logger-head Turtle-woman, Ringa, at Jutapinta

773 At the *pukamuni of Purukupali, Ringa*, the logger-head turtle, with *Garagalani*, the hawk-bill turtle, were responsible for making the large bark ceremonial baskets.[27] When, at the close of the creation period, the men and women changed themselves into creatures or plants, the turtle-women, including *Ringa*, became the sea-going turtles.

x532 778 Pl. 12c deals with the totemic place of the logger-head turtle, a submerged reef, called Jutapinta, some miles north of Karslake Island. The central figure is the reef, the totemic body of the woman, *Ringa*, and the encircling dark-coloured area, *a*, the white sand on the sea bottom. At *b*, is the sea-water, and *c*, *c*, etc., are black rocks under the water, which today are frequented by the logger-head turtles. The yellow bands, *d*, *d*, etc., indicate the seaweed, and the white dotted areas, *e*, *e*, etc., the oysters that live on the reef. The dots, surrounding the central figure, symbolize the eggs inside the body of the logger-head turtle. Unlike the green or hawkbill turtles, the logger-heads do not lay their eggs on the sandy shore.

The Crocodile-woman, Wilinduela, at Wilindu

773 Toward the close of the creation period, the woman, *Wilinduela*, and her sister, *Numanirakala*, were sent out by their brother, *Tukimbini*, to establish totemic centres on northern Melville Island. When they reached Shark Bay, *Wilinduela* stayed on the high ground, i.e., Wilindu Island, while she sent her younger sister to Numanira, a reef uncovered only at low water. Before the two sisters separated, however, they camped together on the mainland at Mundinju (Pl. 10A).

x532 778 The black centre of Pl. 11A, is the totem place of the crocodile-woman on Wilindu Island, the surrounding white circle indicating the jungle around the totemic place. The small black discs are dark-coloured rocks on the cliffs, and the ligher-coloured, rocks on the sea beach. The outer circle is the sea.

On Pl. 11B the central disc is Wilindu Island, while the four circles on its circumference are freshwater springs.

The lower panel *a*, indicates black and *b*, yellow rocks on the coast; *c*, and *e*, *e*, etc., are areas of jungle; *f*, is a rock projecting from the sea, and *h*, the shores of Shark Bay. Poisonous yams, *kuku*, are indicated at *d*, and edible yams at *g*. The many circular discs are oysters on the rocks at Wilindu.

[462] [764] [27] At the conclusion of the present-day burial rites, these baskets, made by the women and painted by the men, are placed on the top of the burial poles as presents to the dead.

Pl. 10A pictures Mundinju, the place where the two sisters, *Wilindula* and 532x
Numanirakala camped before the former made her home at Wilindu, and the 778
latter at Numanira.

The central black disc is Mundinju; the smaller black discs, throughout the painting, are holes in the cliffs from which seep streams of fresh water. The long, radiating panels are bands of red and yellow ochres in the cliffs, the groups of parallel lines, gutters formed in the cliffs, where *Wilindula* urinated; and the groups of chevron designs, ferns growing among the rocks.

The Red-ochre Woman, Numanirakala, at Numanira

Numanira, created by *Numanirakala*, is a partly submerged reef a short 778
distance from Wulrungku (Karslake Island), north-western Melville Island.

At low tide, the aborigines collect one of the best ochres in the country [317]
from this locality, even better than that from Imilu (Fig. 1), for, although Imilu ochres are brightest when used dry, those from Numanira are best when mixed with water.

The central design on Pl. 12B indicates the flat rocks of the submerged 532x
totemic place at Numanira, while similar designs, above and below, are other 778
rocks near by. The darker-coloured segments in these three designs indicate the red ochre, and the lighter segments the mud on the sea bottom. The white circles represent sea-weed, the darker, small rocks under the water, and the dots, the corals growing on those rocks.

The central black disc of Pl. 12D is Numanira; the surrounding white circle, the sand on the sea floor, and the narrow darker line on the periphery, the red ochre, for which the island is noted.

The radiating black panels symbolize clams, the lighter panels, oysters, both of which are plentiful on the rocks of the island. The outer circle is the mud, and the dots are bunches of weed on the sea-bottom.

The Spider-woman, Baraka, at Rungani

During *palaneri* times, the spider-woman, *Baraka*, who lived at Rungani, 773
made a bark basket for the *pukamuni* of *Purukupali*. She first stripped a sheet 285
of bark from a eucalyptus tree, heated it over the fire to make it flexible, then, bending it double, sewed the edges together with split lawyer vine. From that day until now, the women of Melville and Bathurst Islands have [462]
made their baskets in the same manner. After the *pukamuni* of *Purukupali*, 773
Tukimbini instructed his wife, *Baraka*, to establish a totemic place at Rungani, northern Melville Island.

× 532 776 The black oval in the middle of Pl. 13A is a mark on the spider-woman, whose body is indicated by the central oval.

The irregular oval *a*, is her abdomen, and *b*, *b*, is her thorax. At *c*, *c*, are her legs; *f*, *f*, etc., the hairs on her legs, and *d*, *d*, etc., her many knees and elbows. Semi-circles *h*, *h*, and the dotted sections, are spider eggs, and the cross-hatched areas, spider webs.

× 532 778 On Pl. 13C, the central black circle, representing an area of dry land at Rungani, was once the body of *Baraka*, and the surrounding lighter-coloured circle; the egg-case of the spider. The central square is the totemic place, Rungani, the radiating lines within the square being the legs of the spider.

The barred horizontal and vertical panels *a*, *a* (once roads made by the spider-woman as she travelled to and from her totemic place in search of food), are now high, red cliffs, and the diagonal panels leading from the central squares, additional tracks made by the spider-woman. These tracks have since been transformed into watercourses. The eight black concentric circles symbolize the daughters of *Baraka* and *Tukimbini*, and the dotted panels the legs of the children. The chevron designs indicate the faeces of both the spider-woman and her daughters.

The Eucalyptus-tree woman, Imburai-inga, at Alaparima

Pl. 13B, D, pictures the totemic place of a eucalyptus-tree woman, *Imburai-inga*, at Alaparima, north-western Melville Island.

This totemic place, *d*, *d*, is on the sea-beach, with high cliffs, *e*, to the north, and jungle trees, *f*, *f*, near by. At *h*, on the left-hand edge of the painting, is the island, Purapundili (Fig. 1), one of the homes of the spirit children, the *Pitipituis*.

Rocks, near the shore at Piper Head, are indicated at transverse panel, *g*; and a small rocky island, with trees growing along its shore is at *j*. The long design, *k*, at the bottom of the painting, represents the Apsley Straits, which separate Melville and Bathurst Islands.

The oval, *n*, is the aboriginal locality, Punata, in Apsley Straits, which is near the old military settlement of Fort Dundas, *m*.[28] Designs around the edge of this section are trees on the high land, while at *p*, on the bottom of the drawing, are trees on the shore.

The two crescents, *o*, *o*, which practically encircle Punata (*n*), are aboriginal roads; *a*, *a*, etc., are turtles; *b*, *b*, etc., dugongs, and *c*, *c*, etc., dug-out canoes.

[28] Established in 1824, abandoned in 1828.

The Eucalyptus-tree woman, Timarai-inga, at Mandumpi

Pl. 12A pictures the totem place of a eucalyptus-tree woman, *Timarai-inga*, 532x
a small rocky island, near the coast at Mandumpi, north-western Melville 778
Island.

The black diamond shapes indicate bands of yellow ochre, and the light-coloured designs, *a*, *a*, etc., white ochres in the cliff face at Mandumpi. The barred panels, *b*, *b*, symbolize a freshwater stream which flows into the sea. The chevrons throughout the design picture ferns growing among the rocks.

Although I did not gather specific details of the totemic story, it is safe to [114]
assume that *Timarai-inga* was the creator of this totemic place.

The Eucalyptus-tree woman, Pungulu, at Patuapuru

The totemic place of the eucalyptus-tree woman, *Pungulu*, is at Patuapuru (Deception Point), northern Bathurst Island.

The horizontal lines *b*, *b*, on Pl. 14C, D, symbolize the open sea at Patuapuru, and *a*, *a*, etc., on the top of the painting, high light-coloured cliffs. At *c*, is another cliff of reddish colour, and *d*, *d*, etc., are the many rocks on the beach which are covered at high tide.

The long panel *f*, *f*, on the left-hand side of the painting, is the open beach at Patuapuru, and the vertical panels *e*, *e*, etc., are parallel lines of sand-ridges behind the beach.

In the centre line of the painting, at *h*, and *n*, are two casuarina trees, and at *k*, is a freshwater lagoon on the banks of which are many unidentified jungle trees. A high sandhill is indicated at *m* (upper right), and the marine grass on the sea-shore, by the cross-hatching on the background.

The Eucalyptus-tree woman, Aragoutourina,[39] at Putawini

The first camp of *Aragoutourina* was at Puntubu, at the headwaters of the 773
Tjipripu River, central Melville Island, where she stayed for a while. She then travelled south-west over the watershed to Kuruwu River which empties its water into the Apsley Straits. After making this water-course, *Aragoutourina* walked to Putawini Point, western Bathurst Island,[40] where she created the topography and natural history of the surrounding country. 532x

A jungle near Putawini is represented on Pl. 14A, B, by the central white 778

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[39] A red-flowering eucalypt locally known as the bloodwood.

[40] Called Marloo Point on the official maps.

x532 circle, *a*; a small adjacent island by symbol *b*; a large boulder in the sea by *k*
778 (lower right), and the waves breaking over it by the black disc, *c* (above).

Putawini is at *d*, in upper circle; two adjacent freshwater lagoons are at *e*, *h* (upper and lower circles), the uplands are at *t* (upper left), and a spring in the cliffs is at *g*. Sharp-edged water-grasses grow in the lagoons, *e*, *l*; reeds at *n*, *o*, (upper right); red lotus lilies at *q* (top); and paper-bark trees at *p* (upper right).

A boulder at *u* (left), was once the small bark basket of this eucalyptus-tree woman, and a freshwater lagoon *v* (left), her large bark basket.

Putawini Point, *x* (lower right), where *Aragoutourina* left her *pukamuni* ornaments behind, is now one of the homes of the spirit children, the *Pitipituis*.

At *aa* (bottom), is a small watercourse with *bb* as its tributary; *y* and *z* are two paper-bark trees, *ff*, is one of their limbs; *cc* (bottom), and *vv* (upper right), are hibiscus trees; *ee*, *rr*, *xx* and *ww*, mangrove trees; *kk*, represents eucalyptus trees; *ll*, *nn*, pandanus palms; *mm*, stringy-barks; *oo*, kapok, and *qq*, grevillea trees.

The entrance to Putawini creek is at *ii*, with its sandy sea-shores at *gg*, *tt*, and *ww*. White cliffs are at *jj*; red cliffs at *pp*; and isolated boulders at *ss*. The mangrove swamps *zz*, are at the mouth of the Putawini Creek.

Both sides of a large *pukamuni* basket, Pl. 15A, B, C, D, refer to the myth of *Aragoutourina*.

On 15A, B, the vertical line of rectangles, *a*, represents the Kuruwu Creek that flows into Aplsey Straits. This creek was created by the mythical woman. The track she made as she walked from this watercourse to Putawini Point is indicated by line of rectangles at *d*. Tributary, *b*, was created where *Aragoutourina* dug for red ochre, and tributary *k*, where she dug for white ochre with which to decorate herself.

Horizontal lines, *e*, *f*, indicate bands of red, and *g*, *h*, white ochres in the banks of the Kuruwu Creek. The lighter-coloured rectangles, *c*, *c*, etc., throughout the painting, represent deposits of yellow ochre and the darker panels, *q*, *q*, etc., red ochre. Pandanus trees, growing along the banks of the Kuruwu Creek, are indicated by the black discs, *m*, at the intersection of the horizontal and vertical lines.

Pl. 15C, D, describes the seacoast at Putawini. The central black disc, *a*, is a sandbank, once *Aragoutourina's* bark hut; the enclosing circle *b*, the surrounding ocean; and the outer circle *c*, the sea-weed growing on the rocky bottom.

The black square above, at *d*, is a mangrove swamp, and the lighter

border, the muddy floor. The other black rectangles, *p*, *p*, etc., indicate rocks 532x
in the sea, and their lighter-coloured borders, the waves breaking over them. 778

The Eucalyptus-tree woman, Matingalia, at Putawini

A eucalyptus-tree woman *Matingalia* created a rocky island of the same 773
name at the mouth of Putawini Creek, western Bathurst Island. I was not
able to gather further details of the mythical story.

The central vertical panel *c*, of Pl. 16A, is the open sea, and the outer sur- 532x
rounding white rectangle, *h*, *h*, the dry land of the island. Small hills are at 778
k, *k* (top), a large hill is at *o* (top); and deposits of red ochre, *m*, *m*, etc.,
also form part of the island.

A small branch of the Putawini Creek is indicated by the white band at *b*;
another branch, Piriki, at *c*; another near Pintamu, at *d*; and still another
(unnamed) at *f*, *f*. Timinindu and Dunkunaru Creeks (unidentified) are at
g, *g*, and *e*, respectively. The eggs of a crocodile, *lukupianga*, similar to those
of *Jirakupai*, the dangerous, sea-going *Crocodilus porosus*, are indicated by [825]
the white discs, *n*, *n*, etc.

The Bush-fire woman, Puruliangkala, at Turiturina Island

The totemic place of the woman of the bush-fires, *Puruliangkala*, is on 778
Turiturina Island, in Port Hurd, western Bathurst Island, where the mythical [773]
bird-man and later the *Ningauis* performed the first *kulama* ceremonies
(p. 123).

The central white circle on Pl. 16D, is Turiturina Island: the smaller 532x
circles, *a*, *a*, are low rocks in the sea, once the camp-fires of *Puruliangkala*; 778
and *b*, *b*, freshwater springs that provided her with water. The black circles,
c, *c*, etc., are deposits of red ochre, and *d*, *d*, *d*, etc., deposits of white ochre,
used by both the mythical woman and the *Ningauis* to decorate themselves
for their ceremonies during *palaneri* times.

At *e*, *e*, etc., are many milkwood trees, the sap of which, like the ochre [824]
deposits, was also utilized by both *Puruliangkala* and the *Ningauis* for body
decorations. This sap is still used in the opening rituals of the *kulama* [386]
(p. 131). The dots are white fruits, *mandikama*, which *Puruliangkala* created
for food.

The Sand-fly woman, Mandubuka, at Murninini

Mandubuka, the sand-fly woman, established the totemic place of Murninini, 773
south-western Bathurst Island. 778

x 532 778 Pl. 17A, B, deals with the topography of Murninini. The central disc *a*, the transformed body of the mythical woman, is a large red-coloured cliff on the sea-coast, and the outer white oval, *b*, *b*, a band of white rock along the cliff's upper edge.

The black oval, *c*, *c*, is a stream, created by *Mandubuka* to provide herself with drinking water. This stream, which runs over the cliff, *a*, forms a small waterfall, and at *f*, the place where the stream, *c*, *c*, runs into the sea.

A large white cliff, *h*, *h*, *h*, is visible at sea for some distance. Piles of yellow stone, *u*, *u*, etc., were created by the mythical woman, so that she would have ochres with which to decorate herself.

Lururundu Hills, the black rectangles, *g*, *g*, were once the grass huts of *Mandubuka*; *j*, *j*, long rocks on the shore, her digging sticks; and the large boulders, *k*, *k*, her bark baskets. At *l*, is a piece of wood with which the woman pounded the cooked trunk of the fan palm; *t*, (upper left) now a hollow rock, was her palm-leaf (*tulini*) basket, and at *n*, *n*, are places where she once cooked her food.

Pl. 17D refers to another of the totemic places of Mandubuka at Taliau,[41] a salt-water lagoon adjacent to Murninini on Cape Fourcroy.

The light-coloured rectangles above the central horizontal line, *a*, picture the mangrove swamps that fringe the lagoon, and the darker, the sandy patches among the trees. The symbols below *a*, refer to a freshwater swamp, Maundu, about eight miles south-east of Murninini. The darker-coloured rectangles picture the many *Maratjis*, great and small, that inhabit Maundu, and the lighter, the clear water of the swamp. Lines *b*, *b*, etc., are streams of reddish water that flow from Maundu into the sea (myth, p. 157).

Pl. 17C deals with still another locality in the totemic area of *Mandubuka*, at Cape Fourcroy, south-western Bathurst Island.

At *a*, *a*, the totemic places of *Mandubuka*, are large rocks in the sea. At *b*, *b*, the parallel lines represent a long sandy beach, and *c*, *c*, the waves breaking on that beach. The sea mist rising from the breaking waves is indicated by the dotted background.

The black semi-circles, *f*, *f*, at the top and bottom of the painting, are the cliffs at Taliau; *d*, *d*, etc., the light-coloured rocks; and *g*, *g*, etc., the red boulders on the sea-shore. At *e*, *e*, (top and bottom) is an old aboriginal road.

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[41] Hart, 1930, p. 174, refers to the food-collecting rights of this area.

The White-Cockatoo woman, Milapukala, at Milapuru

A white-cockatoo woman, *Milapukala*, made a large freshwater lagoon at 773
Milapuru, near Cape Fourcroy, south-western Bathurst Island. At the same time she created opossums, wallabies, carpet snakes, many kinds of lizards, hives of wild honey and many other foods so that she, and later the aborigines, would have plenty to eat.

The central black oval on Pl. 16c, is the lagoon, the totem place of the 532 ˣ
white cockatoo-woman, the short radiating lines between this and the white 778
oval being groups of rushes on the edge of the water.

The large white oval represents the backwaters of Milapuru, and the outer black oval, the red soil of the surrounding uplands. The radiating lines between these ovals are pandanus trees growing along the shores.

The Pandanus-tree woman, Miatrina, at Primadua

At the command of *Tukimbini*, the *Miatrina* women and their children travelled to Primadua, southern Bathurst Island to establish a totemic centre. [773]

On Pl. 18B, the bark hut of the *Miatrina* women is shown as a black oval in the centre of the painting. This hut is now a submerged rock, called Purupatimu. The dark-coloured band, *a*, *a*, a red sandbar encircling Purupatimu, was once the grass and leaves which the mythical women pushed back when they were cleaning the ground for their camp.

The small white discs (the breasts of the *Miatrina* woman), are now black, submerged rocks; the series of vertical panels (once the children), sandbars in the shallow water; and the two meandering lines, *b*, *b*, (where the children played), salt-water creeks at Primadua. Mungunu, an adjacent locality, is associated with both the *Miatrina* woman and a white cockatoo-woman, *Inkaka*.

The Yam people, Tililindigia and Ubuna, at Primadua

This simple painting, Pl. 18D, about which I gathered but little information, deals with the totem place of two poisonous yams,[42] *Tililindigia* and *Ubuna* at Primadua.

The white oval, the totem place of the yam people, is now a hill at Primadua; the diagonals, outlined in white, are the large *ubuna* yams, and the dark-coloured diagonals, the smaller *tililindigia* yams. The dots represent trees of the Taulama jungle at the base of which trees the aborigines find these yams.

[42] In their raw state these yams are highly poisonous. If, however, they are husked, pounded out flat and soaked in water for several days, the yams are edible. [252]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958

O120 Tiwi O120

The Eucalyptus-tree woman, Mudungkala,[48] *at Jurubulinai (Buchanan Island)*

773 After the burial of *Purukupali*, *Tukimbini* sent his wife, *Mudungkala*, to Jurubulinai (Buchanan Island) to establish a totemic place and create the local foods.

*532 Pl. 19C, D, illustrates, with considerable detail, the topography of the island and the home of the little spirit children, *Pitipituis*.

778 The central design, *a*, is Jurubulinai; circle *b*, (lower left) depicts a small island nearby on which there is a freshwater spring where *Mudungkala* once urinated; and circle *c* (lower right) is a bed of cockles, one of the local foods created by the mythical woman.

On the lower left, a crescent, *d*, symbolizes a small salt-water creek in a mangrove swamp where *Mudungkala* quenched her thirst. At *f*, there is a large rock in the deeper water, a favourite haunt of the turtles. Here the mythical woman once collected white ochre to decorate herself.

Boulders, at one time the stone axes, *mungwanis*, of *Mudungkala* are at *e* (bottom); a stony point of land, the transformed bark basket, is at *g*; a pile of red rocks (her camp fire), at *h*; a sandbar (the cycad palm under which *Mudungkala* sheltered), at *j*; and a salt-water swamp (where she ground her stone axe), at *k*, *k*. The passage between Jurubulinai and Bathurst Island is indicated by the horizontal bands, *gg*, *gg*.

The white crescent, *m*, at the top of the painting, a large sand-bar, Unakumba, on the south of the island, is one of the homes of the spirit children, the *Pitipituis*. The aborigines claim that, when some distance from [776] Unakumba, they often see the spirit children, but, as they come closer, the little people disappear.

When the tide is out, the *Pitipituis* play on a sandbar, *p*, but when it is covered, the spirit children go to their camps at *o*, under the sand, where everything is dry and warm.

[787] [842] Should one of the spirit children wish to visit an aboriginal man in a dream, to ask for a mother, it walks along the road, *q*, and, if unsuccessful in its quest, returns by road, *r*. At *s*, on the left-hand side, is the waterhole from which the *Pitipituis* obtain their drinking water, and at *t*, is their diminutive bark canoe, less than a yard long, which, like the spirit children themselves, can be seen at a distance, but disappears when the aborigines come closer.

Red stones, *ee*, and yellow stones, *dd* (right), were once body paint used by the mythical eucalyptus-tree woman. Her nautilus-shell ornament is at *v*;

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[48] Locally known as the ironwood tree.

her camp, now a bed of oysters at *y*; her bark hut, a large boulder projecting 532x
from a sandbank, at *aa*; and her paper-bark water-carrier, now a large tree, 778
at *z* (left).

The body and head of a carpet snake cooked and eaten by *Mudungkala* are boulders, *x*, *w*, on the coast of Jurubulinai. One of the spots at Cockle Point, in Apsley Straits, where *Mudungkala* camped when returning from *Purukupali's pukamani*, is now a large rock, *bb* (lower left); a spring of fresh water, where she cooked her shell-fish, is at *ff*; while at *l* (centre), there is a patch of submarine grass, the favourite food of the turtles.

The Eucalyptus-tree woman, Mantinuria, at Rulijunga

The eucalyptus-tree woman, *Mantinuria*, created a totemic place, Rulijunga, on the headwaters of the Tjipripu River. 773 778

At Rulijunga there is a large flat plain (central black design, Pl. 18A), 532x
which *Mantinuria* cleared so that the mythical people, travelling from 773
Bathurst and western Melville Island, to attend the *pukamani* of *Purukupali*, could perform an *ilania* (p. 32).

The circles on the periphery of the central black disc, are the roots, and the eight long ovals, the trunks and leaves of cabbage palms which the *Mantinuria* woman created to provide food for herself and the participants of the *ilania* ceremony.

The outer dark-coloured oval, at *a*, *a*, is the level plain surrounding the ceremonial ground, the inner black line symbolizing the red clouds at sunset and the white outer line, the cumulus clouds of the day-time. The dots represent small shrubs and tufts of grass at Rulijunga.

The Fork-tailed Kite-man, Mudati, and his wife, the Dingo-woman, Kirijuna, at Arunumpi

During *palaneri* times, *Mudati*, the fork-tailed kite-man and his wife, *Kirijuna*, a dingo-woman, were travelling together near Arunumpi, southern Melville Island, when *Mudati* saw his wife's brother, *Jurumu*, the eagle-man, coming towards them. *Mudati* warned his wife, for her own safety, not to speak or even look at her brother, but the woman, who had not seen her brother for many years, took a quick glance just to see how much he had grown. Instantly, she dropped dead at her husband's feet. But even as he 825
watched he saw her change into a dingo, rise to her feet and slink away. 593

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Since then, the dingo, ashamed of her actions in those early times, keeps

825 out of sight, while, following the command of *Mudati*, aboriginal brothers
[593] and sisters, once they become adult, never look at each other, nor converse,
except through a third person.

Pl. 20A, B, describes the natural features at Arunumpi. A large rock, at *a*,
x532 was once *Mudati's* camp; a boulder, *d*, his fire; and a path, *c*, made by the
778 mythical man as he walked to and from his camp at *a*. Another path, *b*, was
made by a mangrove bird-man, *Ulubingini*, whose camp is at *j*. *Mudati* is at
m; his wife, *Kirijuna*, at *k*, and *Jurumu*, at *f* (lower left).

Nearby, at *e*, there is a deposit of yellow ochre, and another at *g*, of white, both of which *Mudati* used when he was a *wadjeniati* initiate at the first *kulama* ceremony held at Turiturina (p. 123). *Mudati's kulama* initiation ornaments, now unspecified natural features are: his cockatoo feather head-dress, *primitiki*, at *w*, *w*; arm ornaments, *palmatjinas*, at *x*, *x*, *x*; and cane arm ornaments, *jairinis*, at *v*. A *kulama* ground, *u*, where a ceremony was once held, is now a flat rocky surface, a half a mile in diameter, and the shelter, *t*, behind which the initiates rested during the ceremony, a large boulder.

At *h*, is a patch of jungle where *Kirijuna*, *Mudati's* wife, once collected yams. She left her palm leaf, *tulini*, basket at *l* (upper right); her small bark basket at *o*; and her larger bark basket at *s*. These are now outcropping rocks at the totemic site.

A turtle, once speared by *Mudati*, is now a submerged boulder at *m*; the sand-bank, on which he stood, is a high red cliff at *n*, and the large stream, in which he often caught fish, is indicated by the crescent-shape at *r*.

The Flying-fox man, Murungimpili, and Bamboo-woman, Kaialili, at the Kaialili lagoon

778 At the Kaialili lagoon, near the head of the De Vere creek at Muranapi,
southern Melville Island, there are two totemic places, one belonging to
Murungimpili, the flying-fox man, and the other to *Kaialili*,[44] the bamboo-
[773] woman. Together, these mythical people created many trees, plants, cat-fish,
crabs and other sea creatures.

Pl. 20C, D, deals with the topography of the area. At *m*, is the Kaialili
x532 lagoon, the totem place of the bamboo-woman, at *p*, the Buliati (De Vere)
778 Creek; at *c*, *c*, are other small watercourses, and *e*, *e*, etc., springs, all of which
run into the Kaialili lagoon. The cross-hatching at *o*, *o*, is a swamp, at the
source of Buliati Creek, and the cross-hatched area, *f*, *f*, the grass on its

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[44] I did not find out the relationships between *Murungimpili* and *Kaialili*; it is likely that they were man and wife.

bottom. Symbols, *d* (right) and *g* (top), indicate the red cliffs of the Kaialili 532 x
lagoon. The rocky banks of the Buliati Creek are indicated at *j*, and holes 778
in the ground (once the camps of the man, *Murungimpili*) at *h*.

The open space on the bottom of the painting is the sea, circles, *b*, *b*, etc., being stones on the sandy bottom. Mangrove swamps *w*, *w*, are on the seashore; the dotted areas are jungle trees, *pintabinga*, and two species of eucalyptus trees, *tiningarina* and *ukisangira*. At *a*, *a*, etc., are places where the aborigines dig for ochre, which is similar to that at Imilu. Clouds as seen through the trees, are indicated by triangles, *k*, *k*, and eucalyptus trees by the dots at *n* (top).

The Blow-fly Woman, Mandubuka,[46] *at Muranapi*

Mandubuka, the blow-fly woman, established totemic places first in the [773]
mangrove swamps at Muranapi, then on Waitbak (N.W. Vernon) Island. The lower part of the design on Pl. 19A, B, pictures the natural features at Muranapi, and the upper, those at Waitbak.

The horizontal white band, *c*, *c*, symbolizes the swift tide-way between Muranapi and Waitbak Islands, while the central circle, *a*, the camp of *Mandubuka*, is a rock in the mangrove swamps.

Salt-water creeks, *b*, *b*, flow first into the small lagoons, *x*, *x*, then into the sea at *d*.

Mandubuka brought her drinking water from a spring, *f*, in palm-leaf (*tulini*) baskets. These baskets were later transformed into white boulders in the mangrove swamps.

The two freshwater swamps at *g*, and *h*, filled with bamboos, belong to *Kaialili* (the bamboo-woman of upper Muranapi, Pl. 20C, D). In swamp, *g*, grow the thick-walled species which the aborigines do not use, and in *h*, much smaller bamboos. At the present time, the mainlanders use these smaller bamboos as the shafts of their hunting spears.

Two groups of red stones, *j*, *j*, were once the cooking hearths, while the white boulders, *k*, *k*, are the transformed stone axes of *Mandubuka*.

After the mythical woman created the natural features on the coast of 773
Muranapi, she continued her work on Waitbak Island. Setting out from her camp at *a*, she travelled along the right-hand path, *y*, only to find that the way was blocked by deep water. So she returned to her starting place and, by using the left-hand track, *l*, succeeded in reaching her destination. These tracks have since been transformed into long sand-bars in the sea.

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[46] This is also the name of the sand-fly on Bathurst Island. There is possibly a link between the two totemic places, or they may be the same totemic being.

At *m*, is Waitbak Island, where *Mandubuka* established her second camp; 532 *v* and *w*, being springs where she obtained her drinking water, and *p*, a place 778 where she left one of her yam sticks. The larger stick is now a small island off the coast of Waitbak, and two smaller sticks, *r*, *r*, are rocks on the shore.

Mandubuka sheltered from the rain under a large pandanus palm, *t*, and at *u*, cut a branch from a mangrove tree to make her digging sticks. This locality is now a large mangrove swamp.

The dots, on the upper panel, symbolize tufts of grass and small plants at Waitbak; and on the lower, the tall annual grass of the high land at Muranapi.

The March-fly Woman, Kudjatumpi, at Bonkaitji

[773] The totemic place created by the March-fly woman, *Kudjatumpi*, is a low rocky island, Kudjatumpi, about three miles from the coast at Bonkaitji, southern Melville Island.

The central black dot, *a*, on Pl. 21A, B, is the totem place of *Kudjatumpi*, and the surrounding white area, *b*, a bar of sand exposed at low tide. In the salt-water creek, Bonkaitji, *c* (upper left), which flows into the Clarence Strait, is a small rock, *d*. A fish, with stinging spines, called *pururidji* (probably the stone fish) is at *e* (upper left); and, an edible fish, since transformed into low rocks, on the edge of the waters, is at *j*.

Other natural features made by *Kudjatumpi* are: a small freshwater creek, Biriki, *f*, which flows into Bonkaitji; a lagoon, *h*, created by the mythical woman so that the freshwater turtles would have a place in which to live; a flat rock, *k*, in the deep water, where the present sea-going turtles gather their food; and a lagoon, *l*, which was once *Kudjatumpi's* permanent camp.

A hill, *i* (left) is her transformed bush shelter; a lagoon, *jj* (upper left), her temporary camp; a low rounded boulder, *q*, her fireplace; and a flat rock, *r*, a sheet of stringy-bark which she used as a roof. Long narrow stones at *p*, were once sticks that supported her bark shelter, and piles of stones, *s*, *s* (lower panel), places where she cooked her food.

Kudjatumpi's personal belongings, her paper-bark water carriers, *jurululu*, *w*, her crooked sticks, *m* (lower left), and *n* (centre), used to carry those baskets, her throwing sticks, *x* (right), and her stone axes, *o* (bottom), are now scattered piles of boulders on the uplands of Bonkaitji. Her head ornament of feathers, *hh* (upper left), on the other hand, has been transformed into a group of submerged rocks in the sea.

When the mythical woman painted her body, she created still more

natural features. At *v*, *v*, etc. (right), are her piles of yellow ochre; at *g* (left), 532x
her baskets of red ochre, and at *aa*, *aa* (upper right), the cockle shells in 778
which she mixed the colours. These deposits of ochres are still used by [802]
aborigines to decorate themselves.

Other natural features created by *Kudjatumpi* are: *u* (lower right), Bonkaitji Creek, on the banks of which she placed many trees as homes for the opossums; *ff* (centre) a reef under the water, made from the stones which the mythical woman threw away whilst digging for yams, and the dots on the background, the forests of trees growing on the highlands at Bonkaitji. A hill, *dd* (upper right), is the place where the March-fly woman stood when she created the watercourses, Bailai-intara, *cc*, and Pimaltji, *bb*. The latter is a tributary of Bonkaidji creek.

Pl. 18c, one side of a female *pukamuni* basket (indicated by the square openings), pictures the totemic place of the March-fly woman, at the Kudjatumpi lagoon.

The line of rectangles, *b*, *b*, and *d*, *d*, *d*, represents the water in the lagoon; *a*, *a*, *a*, the patches of sand on the bottom; and *c*, *c*, etc., are white cliffs on the adjacent sea-coast. The vertical lines, *f*, and the horizontal lines, *e*, indicate the water running from the Kudjatumpi lagoon over the beach, into the sea.

DISCUSSION

Although this research on the creation period and its related phases must be 771
regarded as incomplete, the data gathered does provide a general picture of
the beliefs of the Tiwi in their totemic heroes, and the relationship of those
beliefs to the topography of their land. Not being able to visit any of the 123
totemic places, their position on the map (Fig. 1), must also be regarded as
approximate.

It is to be hoped that, before the Tiwi lose their culture, some ethnologist, 000
with ample time, will both fully investigate their remarkable culture and
visit each of their totemic localities to collect, in detail, the mythical story of
the area and its associated natural features.

CHAPTER III

The Pukamuni Ceremony

765 THE burial ceremonies of the aborigines of Melville and Bathurst Islands,
182 based on the *pukamuni* of the mythical man, *Purukupali*, are, by far, the most
important events in their ceremonial life.

These ceremonies, which allow the aborigines full expression for their
grief, provide, at the same time, a complete cultural outlet for their philoso-
phical beliefs, their music, their art and their dancing. No one, watching these
[781] primitive rituals, night after night, could fail to be impressed by the obvious
pleasure experienced by both the participants and the onlookers.

114 Spencer (1928, pp. 647–52), is the only investigator to describe and illus-
trate any details of the *pukamuni* ceremony. Although he saw but one day of
765 the ceremonials, and that of the closing rituals, he records, briefly, many of
the procedures which we witnessed in 1954, i.e., the rite of fire-jumping
(p. 73), the spearing of the grave (p. 83), and (p. 89), the "spearing" of
one of the participants and the erecting of the poles. This evidence shows
177 that, in spite of the disturbing effects of civilization and the complete
765 ecclesiastical ban on Bathurst Island, the *pukamuni* ceremony is still a vital
force in the lives of the Tiwi people.

During the six months the expedition was on Melville Island, Miss Jane
123 Goodale, Mr. W. E. Harney and I witnessed some, or all of the rituals of four
pukamuni ceremonies; one of a man, *Waniamperi*, who had been buried
within half a mile of our camp; another of an old woman, *Makapini*, who,
against the wishes of her relatives, had been buried in the mission cemetery
on Bathurst Island; still another of a premature infant; and, only a few weeks
before I left Melville Island, one of *Nulatini*, the deceased wife of our helper,
Pulanimbuwi.

I will describe the burials of *Waniamperi* and *Nulatini*, and the final rituals
123 of *Waniamperi* and *Makapini*. However, as we saw, in all, twenty-seven
128 *ilanias*, the general pattern of which was similar, I will describe but five of
them; three belonging to *Waniamperi*, one to *Makapini* and one to *Nulatini*.[40]
The short rituals, associated with the dead infant, will be treated as a separate
unit.

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[40] The final rituals took place after my departure from Melville Island. These will be dealt with by Miss Goodale.

I. BELIEFS IN THE SPIRITS OF THE DEAD

The fear of the spirits of the dead and the desire of the living to propitiate 769
them are the bases for the complicated burial rituals, not only of the Tiwi, 765
but of all Australian tribes.

The Tiwi spirits of the dead, the *mopaditis*, live in self-contained com- 775
munities at the various totemic places on Melville and Bathurst Islands. The [778]
mopaditis have the same appearance as the aboriginal folk, except that their bodies no longer have substance, being but nebulous images of their former selves.

No living person has seen these *mopaditis*, for they are invisible by day, white in the moonlight and black in the darkness. Although, normally, the *mopaditis* travel on the surface of the ground in the same manner as the aborigines, they are able, when crossing a river, or an arm of the sea, to walk on the surface of the water.

In the spirit land, the *mopaditis*, who are eternal, retain their totems (*pukwi*), marry spirit women of the correct tribal relationships, and have children who grow to maturity.[47] They eat the same food as the aborigines, going hungry if the hunting is poor,[48] and use the same implements and weapons.[49]

At the death of an aboriginal, the *mopaditi* rises out of the chest of the corpse. If the corpse is that of an infant, or a very small child, its *mopaditi* stays in the immediate neighbourhood, sleeping with the bereaved mother every night, but leaving in the morning before she wakes up. This continues until the woman has recovered from her grief.

After some months, the spirit child, now called a *buda-buda*, re-enters the [842]
body of its previous mother through her vulva and starts life again as a human being.

On the other hand, if the person has lived for some time, its *mopaditi* stays around the grave, mourning because it has to leave its old companions. But after three days have elapsed, the *mopaditi* calls out "*Nimbungi*" (good-bye), and sets off, unaccompanied,[50] to the locality where it was born, which, before

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[47] The aborigines are not certain whether the children, like their parents, have eternal life.

[48] This is unusual; in most of the aboriginal heavens I have heard of, for example, [171]
north-eastern Arnhem Land (Mountford, 1956, p. 323), there is ample, easily-gathered food.

[49] These days, the *mopaditis* have even the modern wooden canoes, although, up to [177]
fifty years ago, their canoes, like those of the living people, were made from a folded sheet of bark.

[50] Some aborigines believe that the father, or some close relative, comes to the grave and guides the spirit to its birthplace.

775 the white man came, would have been its totemic place. As the *mopaditi* travels, flocks of screeching black cockatoos fly overhead to tell the spirits [825] at its birthplace, that a new *mopaditi* is coming to live with them. The local spirits, on its arrival, rush out to welcome the *mopaditi*, beating themselves over the head and shoulders[81] with throwing sticks to indicate their pleasure. At its new home, no matter what its previous state, the spirit is transformed into a young person of good health and equable temperament, for, in the land of the spirits, everyone must be healthy, happy and at peace with each other.

Making its camp with the other *mopaditis*, many of whom were old companions, the new spirit goes out hunting and foodgathering with them until the beginning of its own burial ceremonies. Then, with all of its dead relatives, the new *mopaditi* returns to watch the living people perform the dances and chant the songs of its *ilania* and *pukamuni* ceremonies.

As the *mopaditis* are invisible to mortal eyes, the performers at the burial rituals do not see them, although they know the *mopaditis* are in the surrounding forest, watching all that is going on.

When the rituals of the day are over, and all the people have gone to sleep, the *mopaditis* themselves enter the ceremonial ground, carrying out the same dances, and chanting the same songs as those of the living. This happens at all ceremonies, whether they are the *ilanias*, the final *pukamuni*, or the *kulama* rituals.

At the conclusion of its final *pukamuni*, the new *mopaditi* returns to its birthplace. There it is treated as a youth, and has again to pass through all stages of the *kulama* initiation, progressing at the same rate as when it was a living person.

Occasionally parties of *mopaditis*, especially if not long dead, will return to have a look at their living friends and relatives. But, although the aborigines regard these *mopaditis* as well-mannered and kindly, they still fear them.

Sometimes, particularly at night, a *mopaditi* will follow an aboriginal too
[781] closely, making his skin clammy and his hair rise on end. To protect himself,
[789] the affrighted person calls out loudly to scare away the spirit. If this is not successful, he will kindle a fire or carry a torch of flaming bark, knowing that the *mopaditis* fear the light. For that reason, the aborigines are safe from the attacks of the spirits of their dead so long as they keep their camp-fires burning.

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[576] [81] This is the custom of the living when they meet someone they have not seen for a long while.

A *mopaditi* has been known to hit an aboriginal on the head with a throw- 775
ing stick, causing him to foam at the mouth and become stiff and rigid. The 753
natives cure this *mopaditi* sickness by heating pads of paper-bark and pressing 757
them against the sides of the face or over the sick man's ears until his muscles relax.

Once, when a young woman went hunting in the forest by herself, a male *mopaditi* took her away, fed her on a special bush food until she became, like the *mopaditis* themselves, invisible to human eyes. One evening, after many weeks, the *mopaditi* brought the girl back to a place near the camp, stood her against a tree, gave a loud whistle and left.

When relatives found her, she was demented and deaf, with cold, clammy skin and staring eyes. Quickly they lit a fire, heated her hands, and held them, palms inwards, against the sides of her face. When her body became a little warmer, her relatives pressed heated pads of paper-bark against the sides of her face and over her ears, until she went to sleep. After several days of such treatment, the girl recovered and was able to tell what had happened.

The old men warned her never again to go walking in the forest by herself because should the *mopaditis* recapture her, it might not be possible to bring her back to health.

The aborigines also told me about the time when some *mopaditis* stole an old woman, *Incampuna*, took her into the jungle and covered her with boughs. When her relatives found her, sick and unconscious, they brought her back to camp, shouting loudly to stop the *mopaditis* from following. As before, they applied heated pads of paper-bark to "open up" her head until she became well again.

Plate 47A, B, pictures the grave of the wife of the artist, *Muramajua*. At *a*, 532x
is the face of the spirit of the wife, the horse-shoe design, *b*, representing her hair. The oval *e*, is a small stringy-bark tree, *o*, a large stringy-bark tree, and *p*, are bloodwood trees near the grave.

At *k*, is a stony hill near the burial place, *l*, *n*, are areas of jungle near by, and *m*, is the forested uplands.

A long fighting-stick, *tumutukamuta*, *g*, and a throwing stick, *muruguna*, *j*, are used by the *mopaditis* to strike their human victims on the head, and make them insensible.

2. DEATH AND BURIAL

Although there were minor differences between the burial of the man, 764
Wanianperi, the details of which I gathered from informants, and the burial

764 of *Pulanimbuwi's* wife, *Nulatini*, which I saw, the general pattern was similar. I shall, however, describe both burials, that of *Nulatini* being the more detailed.

(1) *The Burial of Waniamperi*

On the day that *Waniamperi* died, *Murawani*, one of his near relatives, who wanted the dead man buried near his mother, paid a young "worker"[18] a sum of money and two loin cloths to dig the grave.

When the corpse was brought to the burial ground, a number of relatives had a last look at the dead man before he was laid on a series of logs, placed transversely across the bottom of the grave.

This act was a signal for concerted mourning, the women beating themselves with sticks and the men cutting their heads. For personal safety it is [753] [626] imperative that each man and woman show excessive grief, real or feigned, otherwise the *mopaditi*, annoyed at the lack of grief, will make the offending person ill.

After the mourning died down, the "workers" placed boughs on the body and filled in the grave, leaving a small mound on top (Pl. 24c).

[533] While this work was being carried out, the relatives stood on one side of the grave, either singing the *amburu*, the mourning song, or the rain song of Wailu, the totem of *Tiparawilimiri*, *Waniamperi's* father. To the chanting [535] of this song, the men acted the rain dance (Pl. 30B). The aborigines did not stage the totemic dances or chant the songs belonging to the fire totem of Wuriupi (*Waniamperi's* own totem), because, to have done so, would have especially attracted the attention of his *mopaditi*.

The "workers" laid *Waniamperi's* personal belongings at the base of a tree (Pl. 24D), tied his loin cloth and tobacco to the top of a thin sapling which had been driven into the ground at the head of the grave, made a large fire, and left a container of water.

[775] The aborigines believe that the *mopaditi*, seeing his belongings near at hand, water to drink and fire to warm himself and cook the food he gathers in the surrounding forest, will stay near the grave until the time comes for him to leave the locality.

While the "workers" were engaged on those tasks, the rest of the burial party quietly left, not looking behind, lest the *mopaditi* follow them to their camp.

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[767] [18] These "workers" or *wanerar*, being distant relatives of the dead, are in little danger from the *mopaditis*. Therefore, it is safe for them to clean the site, dig the grave, handle the body, and carry out other tasks associated with burial. They are paid for their work by the chief mourners at the final *pukamuni* rituals.

Normally, all the belongings of the dead, except those left at the grave, are 768
destroyed. If a man has a canoe, however, it is inherited by a male relative, [428]
not necessarily of the immediate family. But the canoe cannot be used until
after the final *pukamuni*. It is then painted white and overturned on a smoky [783]
fire to drive out the dead man's *mopaditi*. If this ritual were not carried out, [825]
the *mopaditi* would warn the sea creatures and spoil the fishing.

(a) *The Burial of Nulatini*

At the death of *Nulatini*, the wife of one of my informants, *Pulanimbuwi*, 764
six men, not closely related to the dead woman, were appointed as "workers".

One of them stayed behind in the camp to cut the hair[63] from the head, face 302
and armpits of the husband, after which he washed himself, donned a 751
tokwianga (goose-feather ball) and pulled out his own pubic hairs. 775

The object of these rituals was to so alter the appearance and so destroy the body odour of the husband that the *mopaditi* of his dead wife, *Nulatini*, would neither recognize nor smell him. For, as mentioned previously, the *mopaditis* of the newly dead are lonely people, always on the look-out to steal the spirit of some living[64] person, as a companion. The husband is in especial danger.

There were no signs of grief at the burial site as the men cleared the ground 764

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[63] In the olden days, the hair of the head was cut with cockle shells and that of the face, armpits, and pubes, removed by plucking. A study of the custom of depilation in Australia may reveal some interesting links.

[64] After the death of *Nulatini* I had a remarkable experience. The aboriginal men came
to my tent and told me that, just as the woman was dying, she had called my name three 123
times. As the aborigines believe that the last name called by a dying person is the one 775
whose spirit the *mopaditi* would endeavour to steal, I was warned to take special care of myself. If I left camp, the men told me, I must take one of them to protect me, and if I had to walk around at night, I must always carry a lighted lantern, for, as mentioned earlier (p. 62), all *mopaditis* fear the light.

For a while I heeded the warning of the men (hoping thereby to gain a fuller knowledge of their beliefs about the *mopaditis*), but one day, without thinking, I wandered over a stony ridge to a lagoon, some two hundred yards from my camp.

I had just reached my destination when I heard the aboriginal men excitedly calling my name. Realizing the cause of their distress, yet anxious to gather additional information, I did not reply, but went back to camp by a roundabout way. When the men found me safe in my tent, they were most relieved. They told me that when I was missing they had followed my tracks for a while, but lost them on the stony ground (I was wearing soft-soled rubber shoes). Straightaway, the aborigines concluded that *Nulatini's mopaditi* had stolen my spirit, for, they explained, as soon as this happened, my body, being without a spirit, would not leave any tracks on the ground that they could follow, and, as I would have become invisible (like glass), they would have been unable to see me, even though I were close at hand.

The men were convinced that they had saved my life, for, by calling out, they had frightened the *mopaditi* so much that she had dropped my spirit, which had been able to re-enter my body.

764 and dug the grave, which was about six feet long and five feet six inches deep.
But when, in the middle of the afternoon, four men appeared, carrying the
body, in a fully extended position, and placed it beside the unfinished grave,
a number of women, painted all over in white, sat beside the corpse and cried
heart-brokenly until the grave was finished. There was a chorus of wailing
[302] from both men and women when one of the "workers" painted *Pulanim-*
buwi's body entirely in white (Pl. 23A), as additional camouflage to confuse
[751] his wife's *mopaditi*.

The ceremonials associated with the burial started when first the husband,
then a near relative, dancing astride the corpse, called out loudly, "*Yooh*,
yooh". This ritual, called *wuramu*, was first introduced by the pelican-man at
Purukupali's ceremony. At the present time it is performed by close relatives
[775] of the dead, its object being to scare the *mopaditi* into the grave where it will
not be a menace to the living.

After this ritual, two other men entered the grave and, standing, one either end, took the dead body from those above. Amid the sounds of wailing women and the clapping of men's hands on their buttocks, the corpse was gently laid on a bed of transverse logs on the bottom. Other "workers" cut green branches and placed them across the top of the grave.

The husband, carrying a lighted firestick, then entered the grave, burnt
the hair on his legs and left immediately. The aborigines believe that the
[775] *mopaditi*, smelling the burnt hair of her husband, and thinking he was beside
her, stayed quietly in the grave.

The bushes were thrown into the grave, logs, about five feet long,[66] laid on top, and the hole was filled in, leaving a small mound which was covered with sheets of paper-bark (Pl. 24C). Short sticks were driven into the ground at the head and foot of the grave, on one of which the husband hung the meagre belongings of his wife.

764 Both men and women then performed a series of dances, the men danced
535 the flying fox, shark and crocodile, while both the elder and younger women
moved in a line toward the grave, holding large green leaves in their hands,
palm upward, symbolizing the dead woman when a small child, being carried
by her mother.

A woman, holding her breasts, impersonated *Nulatini's* mother feeding her, while a near male relative mimed the mother carrying *Nulatini* as an infant.

764 At the conclusion, *Pulanimbuwi* seated himself at the head of the grave,

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[825] [66] The aborigines explained that the logs kept the dogs from unearthing the body, but as, at the present time, the body is over five feet underground, this does not appear to be the reason. It may be that, when tools were more primitive and graves not so deep, these precautions were necessary.

while one of the "workers" pouring water over him, washed the white paint 764
from his body (Pl. 23E).

This was the signal for another burst of hysterical mourning; the women
either beat themselves with sticks or sat in groups, wailing heart-brokenly,
while the men, their arms about one another's shoulders, cut one another's
heads with knives. The injuries they received, however were superficial, [304]
and the cutting and self-flagellations more ceremonial than real. [785]

After the husband danced, the significance of which I was unable to learn,
everyone, men, women and children, jumped across the grave. This ritual,
originally performed by *Tukimbini* at *Purukupali's pukamuni*, was supposed [775]
so to confuse the *mopaditi* of *Nulatini* that, should she leave the grave, she
would be unable to find the track to her old camp. The men gave the honey,
then the mosquito calls, and the burial ceremony was over.

As the relatives quietly left and returned to camp, the "workers", as in
all normal burials, lit a fire for the *mopaditi* to warm herself and to cook her [775]
food. They also left water for her to drink. *Pulanimbuwi*, who should have
departed with the other mourners, stayed behind and watched these final
rituals from the top of a nearby *pukamuni* pole (Pl. 23 D).

3. CUSTOMS ASSOCIATED WITH THE GRAVE

(1) *The Determination of the Cause of Death*

Until the performance of the final rituals, about three months after the 765
death of *Waniamperi*, the grave (Pl. 24C), covered with layers of paper-bark,
was left undisturbed, except that a screen of boughs had been erected, as
instructed by *Jibunglialumi* of Bathurst Island (see message stick, Fig. 5F,
G, H), so that the people walking along the motor road leading to our camp
could not see it.

For the first few days after the death of *Waniamperi*, distant relatives of the 761
dead man visited the grave and searched for some track or other indications
of the cause of death; for the Tiwi, in common with the mainland aborigines,
believe that death is the result of the magic of some person or spirit-being,
not the result of natural causes.

The morning after the death of *Waniamperi*, someone noticed a wallaby [825]
looking at the grave. This, the aborigines assumed, was the man, who, [754]
having been responsible for the death,[89] had changed himself into a

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[89] This statement requires more explanation than I can give. I do not know personally of any rituals among the Tiwi by which they can magically kill a man, although, no doubt, they exist. Harney and Elkin, 1942, p. 232, refer to a means of attracting the meteor-man, *Papinjuwari*, to an enemy.

761 [825] wallaby, so that he could see the grave of his victim without being recognised.

[761] On one occasion, when I was travelling with *Pulanimbawi*, just after the death of his wife, he went to her grave, carefully searched the ground for tracks, then lifting up the sheets of paper-bark, examined the mound. Later, *Pulanimbawi* announced that a *Maratji* (p. 154) had killed his wife, *Nukutini*, by getting inside of her body. But, although still there when she was buried, the *Maratji* had escaped through the hole *Pulanimbawi* had seen in the mound.[87]

(2) *The Seclusion of the Grave*

769 The grave of *Waniamperi* was about a hundred yards from the road between our camp and the Snake Bay aboriginal settlement. Although aborigines, who were only distantly related to the dead man, walked backward and forward along this road, all the *pukamuni* people had to take a roundabout path from which it was not possible to see the grave site.

One night, *Marawani*, one of the chief mourners, had to pass along the road to our camp. When he was approaching the position from which the grave site could be seen in the day-time, his wife, wrapping his head in a blanket, led him past the spot. This practice was only allowed at night; it was prohibited during the day.[88]

[775] [784] No aboriginal man hunted the creatures, or woman gathered the plant foods adjacent to the grave, so that, should the *mopaditi* of *Waniamperi* return to his burial place for a while he would find ample food.

4. THE PRELIMINARY CEREMONIES, THE ILANIAS

(1) *The Ilanias of Waniamperi*

765 About two months after the burial of *Waniamperi*, *Wurarbuti*, the ceremonial leader of the Melville Island people, sent message sticks to Bathurst Island aborigines telling them that the *ilanias* (preliminary rituals) of *Waniamperi* were about to start.

[123] We saw eleven of *Waniamperi's ilanias*. But, as they were more or less the same, I will describe only three.

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[765] [87] *Pulanimbawi's* action was viewed with considerable disfavour. He, as a near relative, should not have gone near the grave until the final rituals. Only the *wonarao* (workers) who cut the poles are allowed to do that.

[183] [88] Under the normal tribal conditions, these precautions would have been unnecessary, because the place of burial would then have been in some distant, unfrequented locality.

(*a*) One of the first series, when the "workers" were appointed, which was held in the main camp. 765

(*b*) One of the second series, held at a ceremonial ground mid-way between the first and the place of burial.

(*c*) An *ilania* performed by the Bathurst Island group who attended to take part in the final *pukamuni* rituals.

(*a*) *The First Ilanias*

The first series of *ilanias* was performed on a ceremonial ground, about forty feet in diameter, adjacent to *Wurarbuti's* camp. All stones and tree roots had been dug out so that the dancers would not injure their feet. In the centre of the dancing circle, or *milimika*, a fire was laid ready for the later ritual of *wandiatapinda*, or fire-jumping,[30] a ritual which was carried out at most but not all of the *ilanias* (Pl. 24B). At some of the later *ilanias*, particularly at the second *milimika*, aborigines, close relatives of the dead, performed a similar ritual by climbing a tree at the base of which others lit a fire of grass and dead leaves (Pl. 23C).

Although I suspect that the ritual of jumping over the fire once had a deeper significance, the present day belief is that the fire, by burning the hair on the legs of the aborigines, protects them from stumbling over logs; from their limbs becoming tired on long journeys, or from dead trees falling on them as they travel through the forest. The smoke from the fire also brought them good health. No women took part in the *wandiatapinda* rituals, although the men often held their small children in the smoke. [751] [372]

Wurarbuti, the ceremonial leader or *alouwia* (frontispiece) of the *Waniamperi's pukamuni* rituals, was an intelligent, sophisticated aboriginal, who had worked for long periods in Darwin, and, more recently, had visited the southern States to dance before the Queen of England. 765 177

Because of his knowledge of European ways and the goods of the white man, the songs and dances of this first series of *ilanias* were a curious mixture of the old and the new cultures. Although most, if not all, of the dances performed at the *ilanias* are traditional and totemic, it is permissible to modify them for the song of the moment. [176]

The ceremony opened when the assembled aborigines, about twenty of them, standing within the *milimika*, gave the low-pitched honey call, with the high-pitched mosquito call, which precedes and finishes all *ilanias*.

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[30] Spencer (1928, p. 648), saw this rite at Cockle Point, on Apsley Straits (Fig. 1), during 1911. [114]

765 Parading around the unlit fire in the centre of the *milimika*, the performers
177 chanted a telephone song, the literal translation of which is, "Hallo, that
533 telephone there, hallo, yes, yes," some, as they did so, imitating the winding
[539] of the handle of an old-type magneto telephone.

When the fire, which had been started by a young man, was well alight, the men performed the ritual of *wandiatapinda* by jumping through flames and smoke, each shouting "telegraphy".

The men again assembled at the edge of the *milimika*, and, led by the *alouwia*, called the localities on Melville Island where the white men had camped. As each name was called the aborigines shouted "*wia*" (yes).

One dancer held his hands high above his head, symbolizing a radio aerial, while his companions chanted the following words to the refrain of the telephone song:

> [539] "The Queen sent a radio asking *Wurarbuti* and other men to dance for her."

Then followed songs related to the radio and the telephone. These were
usually performed with the traditional steps and gestures, except that, at the
end, the actor mimed the ringing up with one hand, and the holding of the
[535] telephone to the ear with the other.[60] As the men danced, the women moved
into the *milimika* from the side, performing their own dance, the *ambaru*
(Pl. 30F), some of them crying and endeavouring to beat themselves. They
were, however, restrained by their companions.

765 After a number of dances came the ceremony of appointing the men to carry out the work near the grave.

At the death of any person the tribe divides into two groups: the *puka-*
[616] *munis*, near relatives of the dead, who are forbidden to touch food with
their hands (Pl. 24A), or go near the grave, and the distant relatives, who can
visit the grave site without fear of attack from the spirit (the *mopaditi*).

At *Waniamperi's* first *ilania*, the ceremonial leader chose, from the latter group, ten men, the *wanaras*, colloquially called the "workers". It was their duty to cut and paint the burial poles (one each), help to clear the grave site and dancing ground of sticks and stones, and to carry out other menial tasks associated with the final rituals. For these tasks, the "workers" were paid on the last day of the rituals.

When "workers" were chosen, the aged brother, *Nalgui*, of the dead man, announced that he had bought enough food from the store at the settlement 765 to feed all the men who were to cut the poles.[61]

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[60] This mixture of the ancient and the modern, shows how a living culture gradually absorbs the characteristics of an adjacent people, particularly those from a culture as dominant as our own.

Following this announcement, the chief woman mourner, *Prupadeu*, whose privilege it was to decide on the size of the burial poles, marked with her toe, in the dust of the *milimika*, the length and thickness of a series of oversized poles.

This led to a great deal of discussion between the leader, *Wurerbuti*, and the woman, *Prupadeu*, before he finally persuaded her to reduce the dimensions of the poles to a reasonable size. *Prupadeu* wanted the poles for her relative to be as many and as large as possible.

This matter settled, the "workers" brought a number of steel axes into the [177] *milimika*. The *alamvia*, painting the handles white and putting red cross lines [531] on the blades, stood the axes in the centre of the dancing ground. Then both the *alamvia* and the other performers walked around the axes singing the telephone song.

A series of traditional dances followed, representing *Jirakati*, the white- 535 headed sea-eagle (Pl. 30J), *Puruti*, the sea-osprey, and *Tjalati*, the jabiru 765 (Pl. 29A).[62] Two women and two young boys performed the shark (*Taduwale*) dance (Pl. 25C), the ritual finishing with the honey and mosquito calls. [825] The "workers" picked up their axes and walked away, accompanied by everyone except *Prupadeu*, who remained behind, still chanting the *amburu* song of mourning.

(*b*) *The Second Ilanias*

The second series of *ilanias* was performed about halfway between 765 *Wurerbuti's* camp and the burial ground.

In this series, we were able to see the traditional pattern of the *ilanias* in operation, including the return and feeding of the "workers" after their day's labour of cutting the poles near the grave site. The songs and dances, too, [533] instead of referring, as in the first *ilanias*, to the goods of the white man, his radio and his telephones, dealt almost exclusively with dances belonging to [177] the locality of Wailu, north-eastern Melville Island, the country of *Waniamperi's* father and the totemic place of fresh water, *Andjalui* (p. 42).

This series of *ilanias* could be divided into five sections,

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[61] At the present time, this is just a traditional gesture, reminiscent of the days when it was the duty of the *pukamuni* group to feed the workers while they cut and painted the poles (Pl. 25B).

[62] In a creation myth, the jabiru is called *Tipuru-undunga*. It is likely that the bird has [114] several names. Hart (1930, p. 280), draws attention to the multiplicity of names among the Tiwi.

765 (i) The ceremonial fight between the *pukamani* men and the "workers" returning from cutting the poles which are near the grave.

(ii) The feeding of the "workers" by the *pukamani* men and women.

(iii) The totemic songs and dances.

(iv) The *pumati*, in which married men and women beat the relatives of their spouses with boughs.

(v) The rite of fire-jumping (*wandiatapinda*).

(i) *The Ceremonial Fight.* When, late in the afternoon, the "workers" were returning to the *milimika* from the grave site, where they have been cutting the burial poles, they announced their coming with the honey and mosquito calls.

The *alowvia*, who had assembled the *pukamani* men in the *milimika* in readiness for this ritual, answered with the honey call.

The "workers" emerged from the forest in a body and, running toward the men in the *milimika*, cast short sticks, as spears, at the *pukamani* men, who replied vigorously with throwing sticks, neither group of contestants, however, trying to hit the other.

The "workers" having exhausted their spears, rushed into the *milimika*, where, to the accompaniment of much laughter and good-humour, they wrestled with the *pukamani* men (Pl. 25D), until they (the "workers") were pushed out of the *milimika*.[63]

(ii) *The Feeding of the Workers.* It is the duty of the *pukamani* group to feed the "workers" while they are cutting and painting the poles.

On the edge of the *milimika* were two baskets, both painted red, one made by a woman of the rain and freshwater totem of Wailu, and the other by a woman of the fire totem of Wuriupi, the totemic place of the dead man, *Waninyperi*. Food caught or gathered by the *pukamani* men and women was cooked and placed in those baskets for the "workers" only, it being taboo to all members of the *pukamani* group.

After the "workers" had been "vanquished" in the ceremonial fight, the *pukamani* men carried the baskets[64] into the centre of the *milimika* and there stood guard while the "workers" had their meal (Pl. 25B).

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[184] [775] [789]

[63] There is no clear-cut belief behind this ritual. Some informants said that the "workers", having been adjacent to the grave for many hours, were inhabited by *mopaditis* who must be driven out before the "workers" are "safe" to associate with the *pukamani* group; others said that the *mopaditis*, following close on the heels of the "workers" had to be frightened away by what, to them, appeared to be a real fight, before the *ilanias* could start.

[64] These baskets, though they always stood on the edge of the *milimika*, were not often used in the *ilanias* we witnessed, as the participants were able to get most of the food they required from the settlement. If, however, the burial ceremony had been held at some remote place, the *pukamani* men and women would have had to spend the day in hunting in order to provide food for the "workers".

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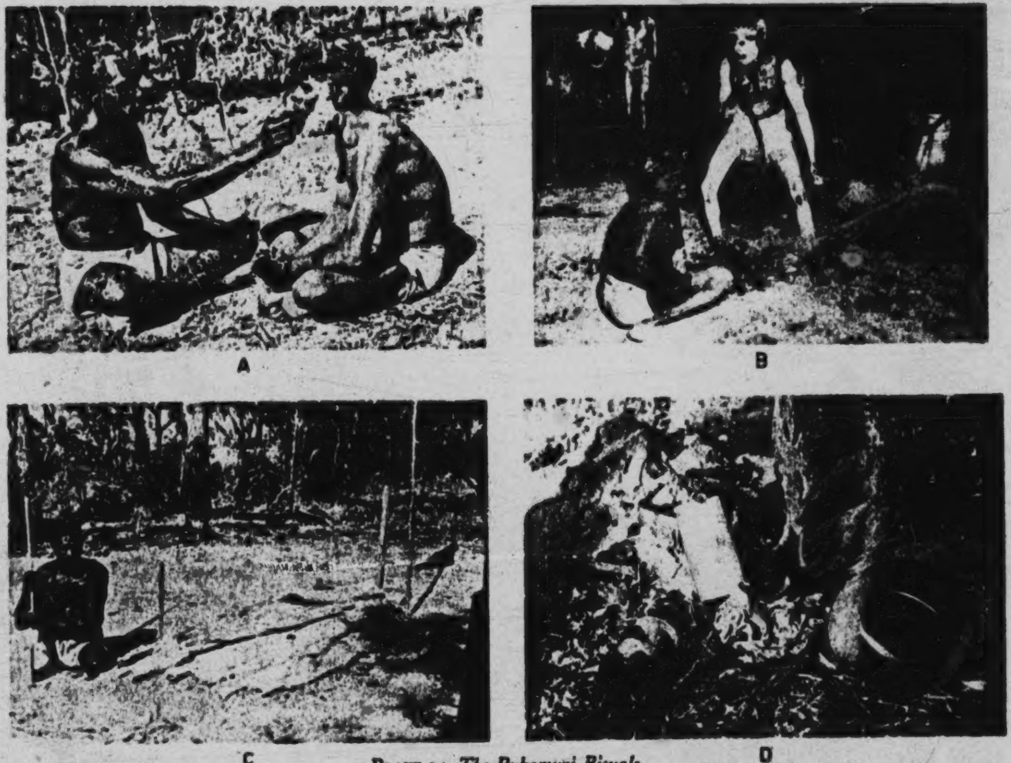

PLATE 24. *The Pukamuni Rituals*
A, Feeding Pukamuni Man; B, Rite of Wandiatapinda; C, The Grave; D, Belongings of Dead Man, Waniamperi.

[p.72A]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958

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[p. 72 B]

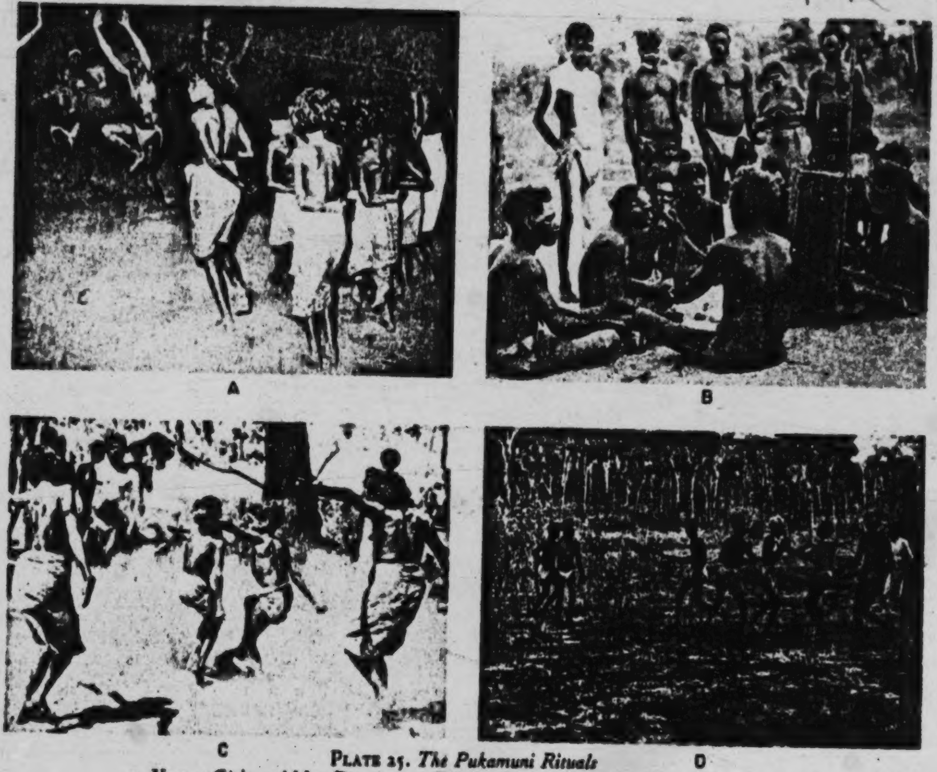

PLATE 25. *The Pukamuni Rituals*

A, Young Girls and Men Dancing; B, Feeding Pukamuni Workers; C, Women and Boys Dancing; D, Ceremonial Fight at Ilania.

[p.72 C]

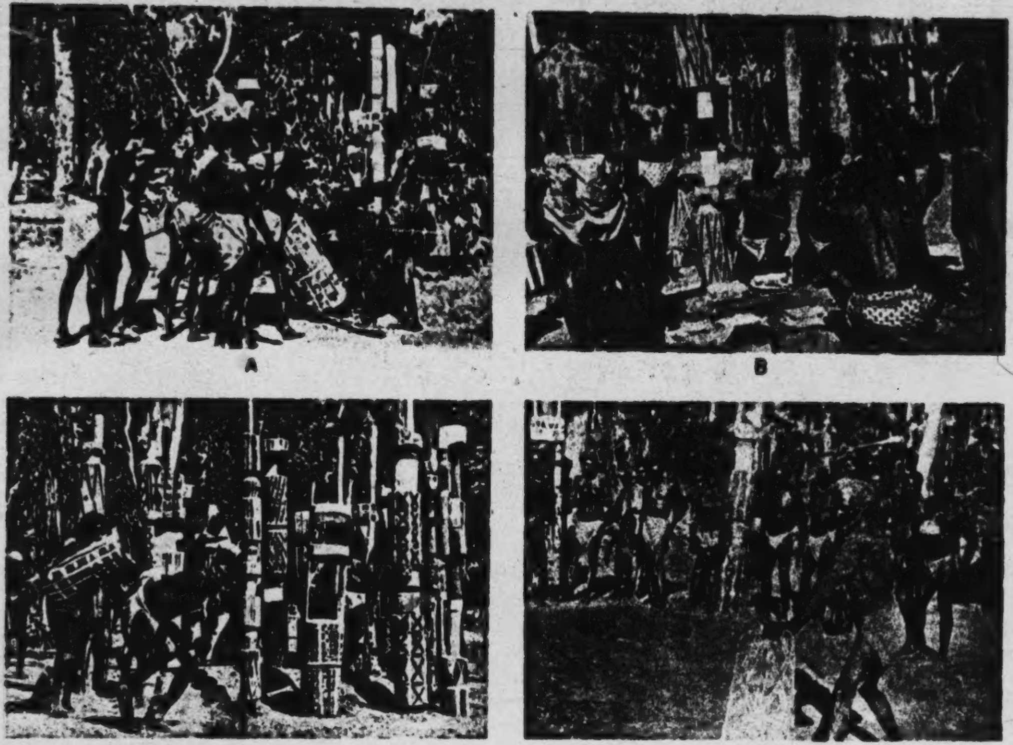

PLATE 26. *The Final Pukamuni Rituals*
A, Erecting Poles on Grave; B, Arranging Gifts for Workers; C, The Basket Dance; D, Urumatjina's Dance.

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[p.72 D]

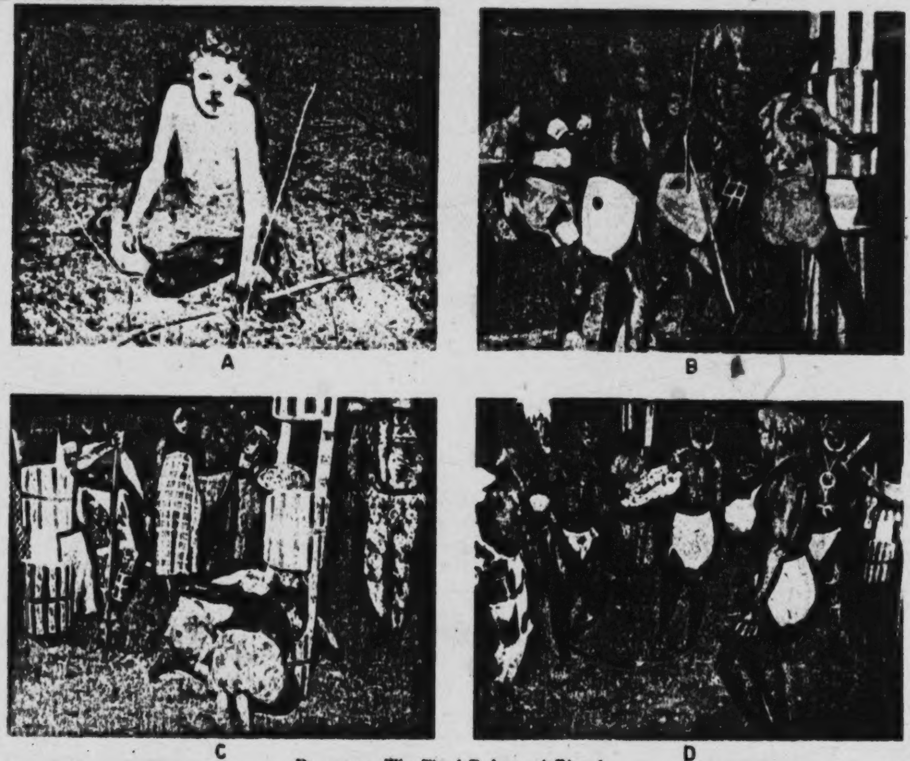

PLATE 27. *The Final Pukamuni Rituals*
A, Chief Woman Mourner; B, Scene at Burial Poles; C, Mourning at Burial Poles;
D, Presentation of Gifts.

(iii) *The Totemic Songs and Dances.* At the completion of the meal, both 765 the "workers" and the *pukamuni* men and women performed a series of dances to the accompaniment of traditional totemic songs.

Almost without exception, these songs and dances belonged to the totemic beings of Wailu, the country of *Tiparawilimiri*, the father of the dead man, *Waniamperi*.

These rituals were opened by the leader, who, standing in the centre of the *milimika*, called out the names of the totemic beings of Wailu, *Andjakai* (fresh water), *Pakadringa* (thunderstorm), *Tomituka* (rain), and *Bumerali* (lightning). As before, the assembled aborigines shouted "*wia*" after each name was called.

The men then chanted the rain song, "The heavy rain falls and the frog [539]
calls, *poki, poki, puturaka*", while the men danced, with their fingers pointing 765
to the ground, symbolizing falling rain (Pl. 30a), and the woman, *Prupadau*, 535
hopped along the ground in imitation of the frog-woman,[88] *Kwouk-kwouk*. As the dance proceeded, the men and *Prupadau* all imitated the actions of the frog-woman by hopping along the ground on their hands and knees.

While the dance was in progress, the leader called out "*Tomituka*" (rain). *Prupadau*, picking up a sheet of paper-bark, held it over her head and shivered, and the men, their hands clasped tightly over their heads, shouted, "*Batua, batua*" (rain finish). This completed the dance. *Pulanimbuwi* danced the white-headed sea-eagle, *Jirakati* (Pl. 30j), before the *pumuti* began.

(iv) *The Pumuti.*[89] The *pumuti* rituals, which are always carried out with 765 much goodwill, friendliness and laughter, were performed at most, if not all, of the *ilanias*, and, in a restricted form, at the final *pukamuni*.

At some stage, usually toward the end of the *ilania*, sometimes more than once, each man and woman, taking a bunch of leaves, or a roll of paper-bark and calling softly "*Ooh, ooh, ooh*", beat the wife, or husband, sisters, brothers, and all the near relatives of that particular spouse.

(v) *The Rite of Fire-jumping and the sending out of the Message Sticks.* The 765
rite of fire-jumping, or *wandiatapinda*, carried out in the second series of 372
ilanias, differed from that in the first series. Instead of the participants stepping over a fire (Pl. 24a), a number of the close relatives climbed a tree at the base of which others lit a fire of grass and leaves (Pl. 23c). As each man

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[88] The frog-woman, whose totemic place is Wailu, north-eastern Melville Island, is the mother of *Pakadringa*, *Tomituka* and *Bumerali*.

[89] This ritual would tend to reduce tensions between the spouse and his, or her, [593]
relatives, which is considerable in some communities. [578]

765 slipped down the tree and jumped clear of the fire, the other participants
372 called his totemic name.

Toward the end of this series of *ilanias*, the "workers" announced that they had finished cutting the poles. The leader, the *alowvia*, hearing this, gave permission for the poles to be "cooked", i.e., burnt in a fire of blazing boughs, to provide a black ground on which to paint the designs. The leader [202] also ordered that the *purunkitas* (message sticks, Figs. 5, 6, 7), be sent out to the various totemic groups. These sticks intimated that the final *pukamuni* ceremonies would take place in about twenty days.

(c) *The Bathurst Island Ilanias*

765 About a week before the final burial rituals of *Waniamperi*, a number of aborigines from Bathurst Island, accompanied by their wives and *Katopi*, the son of the dead man, made their camp and cleared a ceremonial ground not far from the second *milimika* used by the Melville Island people.

The Bathurst Island *ilanias*, under the leadership of an elderly aboriginal, *Jibunglialumi*, followed the traditional form, except that the first two phases were omitted, i.e., the fighting and the feeding of the "workers".

Three groups of songs were chanted to the accompaniment of the appropriate dances.

(i) The *Ningaui* songs and dances.
(ii) The mission lugger songs and dances.
(iii) The jabiru (*Tjakesi*) songs and dances.

(i) *The Ningaui Songs and Dances*

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539 The leader, *Jibunglialumi*, and his companions chanted the following *Ningaui* songs. These are the literal translations.

765 "I am the head man of the *Ningaui*, I am, Eeh, Eeh."[67]

"I push aside the mangrove branches with my hands, Eeh, Eeh."

"The *Ninguais* are out hunting. The calls of the white cockatoos tell them that someone is coming, Eeh, Eeh."

A *Ningaui* woman, having just given birth to a child, sings—

"The flies are looking at me, the flies are crawling on my shoulder, Eeh, Eeh."

A *Ningaui* man, looking at his newly born child, sings—

"Little new-born man lying on the ground, Eeh, Eeh."

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[825] [67] This is the call of the *Ninguais* which, the aborigines claim, they hear in the mangrove swamps of south-western Bathurst Island. It is possibly the call of one of the swamp birds.

Neither *Jibungŋalumi* nor any of the Bathurst Islanders performed spirited 765 dances to these songs. The leader, impersonating a *Ningausi*, walked round [534] the *milimika* with awkward, bent gait, either beating his music sticks together or holding his hands tightly against his sides with his fingers outstretched (Pl. 30E).

Following the *Ningausi* songs, the men lit a fire at the base of a eucalyptus tree which *Katopi*, *Nangrinini*, and several other relatives of the dead man, climbed to perform the rite of *wandiatapinda*. As each man slid down the trunk, the aborigines called the totemic place of Wailu, and the names of rain, thunder and lightning. Later, the men performed the rain dance (Pl. 30B) in [535] the *milimika*, while the women, coming in from the side, danced the *ambaru* (Pl. 30F).

(ii) *The Mission Lugger Songs and Dances*

The dances started with a long *ai*, *ai*, *ai*, which announced that the boat 765 533 had been sighted. Then, while the men danced the sail of the boat, with their 535 hands held above their heads, the leader chanted— 177

"The waves beat the sides of the boat, but it goes straight on."

With high prancing steps and hands rotating one over the other, the aborigines mimed the engines and the propeller of the lugger.

"The engines spark together as the waves hit the side of the boat."

Other songs, to which the performers danced the relevant actions, were—

"The wake of the lugger."
"The lugger is on the slips ready to be painted."
"We are scrubbing off the old paint and giving it a new coat."

Every time *Katopi*, the son of the dead man, took part in the dance, the women set up a wail.

At the conclusion of the boat songs, the men and women took part in the 765 *pumuti*, lightly beating each other's spouses and their relatives with boughs.

(iii) *The Jabiru Songs and Dances*

The last series of dances were given by a middle-aged Bathurst Island 765 man, *Nilituna*, who imitated, with humorous gesticulation and much 535 abandon, the antics of the long-legged jabiru, *Tjalati* (Pl. 29A), as it walked, fished and rested in the lagoon.

The words of the *Tjalati* song were— [539]

"When *Tjalati* lifts one leg, he is ready to fly."

At the conclusion of the *Tjalati* dance, the *ilania* ended with the honey [825] and mosquito calls.

765 (2) *The Ilanias of Nulatini*

[123] We were able to see the opening mourning rituals, *iramparimi*[88] of *Nulatini* and six of her *ilanias*.

[128] Rather than deal with all of these ceremonies in detail, I will describe the *iramparimi* rituals and a typical *ilania*, in which the aborigines carried out all phases of the rituals, with the exception of the appointment of the "workers". Although the rite of *pumuti*, *wandiatapinda*, or feeding the "workers", did not take place at every *ilania*, they will be included in this description.

(*a*) *The Opening Mourning Ritual, Iramparimi of Nulatini*

Ten days after the burial of *Nulatini*, the aborigines of Melville Island performed the ritual of *iramparimi*. The function of that ceremony was to express [775] grief over *Nulatini's* death, and to tell her spirit that, as she did not now belong to the same realm as themselves, she must leave her grave and return to her totemic country.

The ceremony was held about thirty yards from the camp of the dead woman. Most of the aborigines were present, but two men, *Pulanimbuwi*, the husband, and *Tupiatira*, *Nulatini's* nearest relative, took the leading parts.

The rituals opened in the late afternoon with *Pulanimbuwi*, painted in [302] white, elaborately decorated and carrying a long stick, walking slowly to- [533] ward the assembled people, singing the *amburu*, the women's song of mourning (Pl. 23A).

Every now and again, the husband stopped, leaned on his stick and looked round (apparently for his wife's *mopaditi*), before continuing on his way to the place of ceremony.

Coming out of the forest in an almost opposite direction was *Tupiatira*, also painted in white, waving green branches in his hands. About fifty yards from the old camp of *Nulatini*, *Tupiatira* called her name loudly, and, after listening for a while, announced that, as she had not answered, she must be dead.

As *Tupiatira* walked forward he continued to call, while *Pulanimbuwi*, now accompanied by his sister, *Kundi*, came in from the opposite direction, both singing the *amburu*. When the men were only a few yards apart the aborigines formed themselves into two lines, facing each other.

[535] At a signal and a loud "*Book, book*" from *Pulanimbuwi*, an old man, *Malumerinita*, accompanied by six to eight of the men, danced between the

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[88] The *iramparimi* of *Waniamperi* was performed before our arrival.

lines as flying foxes (the totem of *Nulatini's* father),[illegible] their arms moving 765
alternately up and down and their little fingers pointed skyward (Pl. 30c). [535]

The dance finished, the assembled men accompanied by *Pulanimbuwi* and *Tupiatira*, with their arms around each other's necks, mourned hysterically for the dead, while the women danced the *amburu* on the outside of the group. Several times, in his grief, *Tupiatira* collapsed to the ground only to be lifted to his feet again by the still mourning husband.

The sounds of mourning continued for some time, gradually becoming less until *Nangrinini* gave the honey and mosquito calls, and the ceremony was over.

(*b*) *The Ilania*

At one end of the *milimika*, which was situated at the camp of the dead woman, was a pole on which *Pulanimbuwi* had tied a piece of printed calico as a flag.

The *ilania* opened when seven of the "workers" giving the honey and mosquito calls, emerged from the forest, and, running toward the *milimika*, cast sticks and pandanus leaves, as spears, at the *pukamuni* men who awaited them. There was general fighting and much laughter before the "workers" were ejected.

In the centre of the *milimika*, as food for the "workers" a woman had
placed nine large cooked crabs which the "workers" distributed among [262]
themselves. After this was done, the men performed the rite of *wandiatapinda* by either walking through or jumping over the fire which had been lit in the *milimika*. *Nulatini's* husband did not take part in this ritual but, with a flat fighting stick in either hand, wandered about the ceremonial ground, singing the *amburu*.

Following these rituals, the aborigines chanted a number of songs and 533
carried out the following dances, those of the flying fox being totemically 765
related to the dead woman's father.

(i) The flying foxes and the sea-eagle.
(ii) The crocodile.
(iii) The shark and the stingray.
(iv) The flag songs.

(i) *The flying-fox and sea-eagle songs*

"The flying foxes are out late, eating the blossoms of the stringy-bark [539]
and eucalyptus trees."

[illegible] As mentioned earlier, the totem of the dead person is never referred to in the *pukamuni* rituals.

533 "The sea-eagle, *Jirakati*, dives upon the flying foxes, catching them in
539 her claws and eating them. The rest fly away."
765 "The flying foxes call to each other, the sea-eagle is attacking us—let us go."

As these songs were being chanted, a number of men clustered in the centre of the *milimika*, like a group of flying foxes in a tree.

With a loud call, *Nangrinini*, his outspread arms symbolical of the wings of the sea-eagle, *Jirakati* (Pl. 30j), "swooped" down, scattering them in all directions.

As *Nangrinini* returned to the outside of the *milimika*, the "flying foxes"
[535] reassembled and, with prancing steps again danced with their little fingers pointing upward (Pl. 30c).

The flying-fox songs continued—

"Cast your throwing sticks where the flying foxes are thickest and break many wings at one time."

"Hit the flying foxes so that they will drop in the mud."

"Cook the black flying foxes and dry them in the sun."[10]

Again the men assembled and danced the flying-fox while *Malumerinita* called the totemic places of the flying fox at Muranapi (p. 56), interspersed with calls of "*Wia*" from his companions. *Pulanimbuwi* still wandered.

(ii) *The crocodile songs*

"You cannot cross the river because it is full of crocodiles."

"Beware, the crocodiles are in the mangroves waiting to catch us when we cross the river."

These songs were accompanied by the spirited crocodile dance (Pl. 30e),
[535] while *Malumerinita* called the names of the totemic places of the crocodile, *Jirakupai*, on south-west Bathurst Island.

(iii) *The shark and the stingray song*

"Do not spear the shark, it is chasing a stingray."

To this song several men performed the exhausting shark dance (Pl. 300).

(iv) *The flag songs*

"The wind blows and the flag moves."

[177] "The Government Administrator gets his flag from the Queen."
535 To these songs, the man danced with their hands, as a flag, moving above
765

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[10] This song suggests that the Melville Islanders stored or traded the cooked and dried bodies of these creatures.

their heads. During these songs, the husband sat quietly at one end of the 765
milimika, with his head in his hands (Pl. 23B). [535]

The *ilania* concluded with *Nangrinini* calling *Aluprumani* (a mangrove bird); *Malumerinita* calling *Tjirinini* (the red-backed sea-eagle) and the assembled men, making the honey and mosquito call.

During one of the *ilanias* of *Nulatini*, a near relative had his name changed [553]
from *Miralipaiwa* to *Tukuwuinganili*.[71]

(3) *The Ilanias of Makapini*

At the same time as the *pukamuni* of *Waniamperi* was being performed, 797
an old woman, *Makapini*, was baptized at Bathurst Island by the priest, just as she was dying, and, although she had never accepted Christianity, was buried, against the wishes of her relatives, in the mission cemetery.

The aborigines of both Bathurst and Melville Island were distressed over 765
this incident because as *Makapini* had always been a "pagan" (as the mission [775]
authorities call the unconverted), her spirit could not go to the white man's "heaven", and, as the *pukamuni* ceremonies were prohibited on Bathurst Island, the spirit of *Makapini* was doomed to wander, lonely and unhappy, for ever. To prevent such a calamity (for lonely *mopaditis* are a danger to the living), the aborigines of Melville Island performed a modified *pukamuni*, called the *aramatruni-nipungari*,[72] so that, at its conclusion, the spirit of old *Makapini* would travel happily to her future home.

The pattern of this ceremony differed somewhat from that of *Waniamperi*. At a *milimika* near the camp of the ceremonial leader, *Malumerinita*, the Melville Island aborigines held five *ilanias* over a period of eight days. The final two days of the *pukamuni* were held among the poles.[73] I will describe a typical *ilania* and later the final *pukamuni* rituals.

The *ilania* opened with one of the "workers", who had been in the forest cutting the burial poles, running toward the *milimika*, stick in hand, giving the honey call. One of the *pukamuni* men rushed out to drive him away, but, after a sham fight with throwing sticks, brought him into the *milimika*. 765

The predominating songs and dances of this and other *ilanias* of *Makapini* 533
were associated with the mythical wild-honey people[74] of Bathurst Island. 535

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[71] Hart (1930, pp. 280–99) describes how the custom of altering the names of near relatives at death causes rapid changes in the language.

[72] This type of *pukanuni* ceremony is also held when aborigines are drowned at sea [766]
and their bodies not recovered.

[73] This was a variation of the previous *pukamuni*, probably because the body was not at the place of ceremony.

[74] Although I did not inquire, it is certain from the songs, that the father or mother of the dead woman belonged to one of the honey totems of Bathurst Island.

765 Many of them referred to "creation times" when *Tukimbini*, of Murupianga
533 told the honey people of Bathurst Island to be the *pukamuni* men and women
[535] at the burial rituals of *Purukupali* (p. 30).

The following is a selection of the honey songs—

> [539] "Let all the men who are *mandalini* (a eucalyptus flower, particularly rich in honey) come to this place (Tapararimi) and dance for the *pukamuni* of *Purukupali*."
>
> "With all your ornaments, start walking (to Tapararimi)."
>
> "Bring all your ceremonial ornaments to our place (Tapararimi) where we will hold a big ceremony."

Another man chanted a lengthy song describing the death of *Purukupali*, and another, which instructed the performers, at the conclusion of the rituals, to take the cane rings, *jairinis* (Pl. 31H) from their arms and leave them on the grave.

The songs and dances about *Purukupali*, the honey people of Bathurst
Island, and their doings at the first *pukamuni*, were followed by another
series which related specifically to the collecting of wild honey. In all these
[535] performances, the men carried out the honey dance with high knee action,
their hands held above their heads and their fingers pointing upward
(Pl. 30D).

One man sang about a fly that lives in the hives of wild bees and about a large hive in a tree with a long snout (entrance) and much honey. Then, accompanied by several others, he mimed the action of bees flying in and out of a hive; the aborigines locating the hive, climbing the tree, cutting off the limb containing the hive, and eating the honey. These dances were followed by the ceremonial leader, *Malumerinita*, calling out the totemic places of honey, most of them on Bathurst Island. As each name was called, the assembled aborigines shouted "*wia*".

A young man started to sing about a pearling lugger, but was told by old
Tjamalampua to stop and use only the *palaneri* songs. The same man then
[535] danced the actions of the jabiru, *Tjalati*, to the appropriate song (p. 75), and
one relating to the buffalo,[78] to the accompaniment of "*Prr, prr, papringi-pali*" (go away big eye, prr, prr), then a song of *Aruni*, the poison fish:
"*Aruni aruni, drr, drr, drr*", which referred to the sinking of a boat, the
Wanganui, off south-western Bathurst Island.[79]

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[825] [78] The aborigines believe that the buffalo, brought to Fort Dundas in 1824, belong to the *palaneri* (creation) period.

[79] The *aruni* is a spiny poisonous fish (possibly the stone fish), which was supposed to have sunk the *Wanganui* by driving its spines through the ship's bottom. The *drr, drr*, of the song represents the sounds of the spines as they were driven into the ship.

The two forms of fire-jumping (described earlier, p. 73) were also used 765 in these rituals.

The *ilania* closed with the performance of the rite of *pumuni*, then the usual honey and mosquito calls.

5. THE FINAL PUKAMUNI RITUALS

(1) *The Pukamuni of Waniamperi*

For the sake of simplicity I will describe, under this heading, the rituals carried out during the last two days of the closing phases of the *pukamuni* ceremony of *Waniamperi*. These rituals took place about three months after burial and about a month after the performance of the first *ilania* and the [202] receiving of the message stick (Fig. 5F, G, H) from the Bathurst Island aborigines.

During these final ceremonies, the aborigines divided themselves into two [616] groups; the Melville Island men and women, under the leadership of *Wurarbuti*, and the Bathurst Island men and women, with a few of the Melville Island aborigines linked with them totemically, under their leader, *Jibunglialumi*.

The "workers" had cleared two dancing grounds: one, Fig. 4A, about fifty yards south of *Waniamperi's* grave, belonging to the Melville Island aborigines, and the other, Fig. 4B, about thirty yards east, to the people from Bathurst Island.

There were seven decorated burial poles on *milimika*, A, and three on B (Fig. 4). The three poles, although cut and painted by the local men, had [432] been given, with their permission, to the Bathurst Island group who were responsible for the payment of them.

The final rituals extended over two days. After both groups had performed *ilanias* in the middle of the first morning, they spent about six hours decorating [302] each other with elaborate facial and body designs, one of which, that of *Wurarbuti*, is illustrated on the frontispiece. Other facial designs are illustrated on Pl. 28. In the late afternoon all the participants, men and women, moved to the two *milimikas* near the grave (Fig. 4A, B), where they performed a series of dances until dark. The aborigines camped nearby, most of them within a hundred yards of the grave. The next morning the final rituals started.

These *pukamuni* rituals can be divided into five distinct phases—

(*a*) The opening rituals.

(*b*) The songs and dances.

765 (*c*) The payment of the "workers".
(*d*) The erecting of the poles.
(*e*) The final mourning rituals.

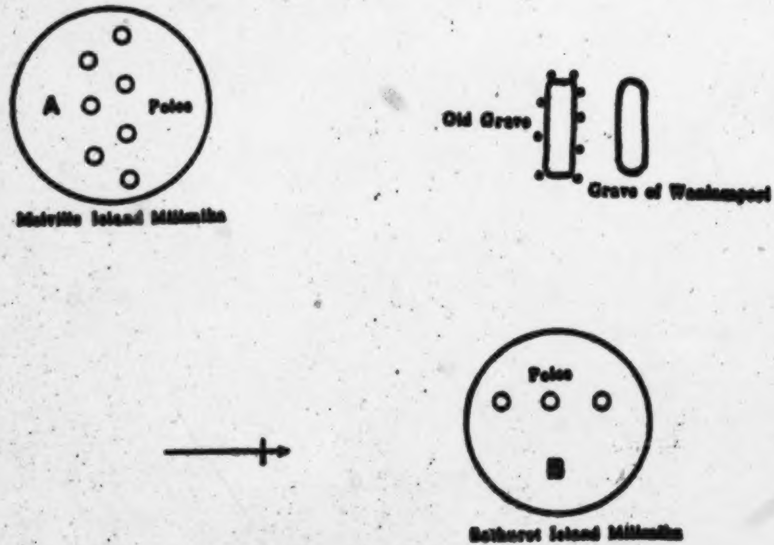

FIG. 4. *Ceremonial Ground, Waniamperi's Pukamuni*

(*a*) *The Opening Rituals*

Early on the first morning, the men, women and children left the main camp and travelled to a temporary ceremonial ground, in the forest, about three hundred yards east of the grave.

The Melville Island group, under *Wurarbuti*, assembled straightaway and performed a small *ilania*, in which some of the men, after the usual honey and mosquito calls, started to chant the rain song of *Tomituka*, whilst others [533] either lit a fire and crouched over it, or sheltered under pandanus trees, shivering as if wet and cold.

As the song changed to the *impok, impok*, of the frog-woman, several men [535] and the woman, *Prupadau*, hopped around the *milimika* in imitation of a frog (Pl. 29D).

When the Melville Islanders dispersed to paint themselves, the Bathurst Island men, under *Jibunglialumi*, performed another *ilania* on the same spot.

The leader started a song describing a fight in which the dead man, 765
Waniamperi, had taken part. To this refrain, the performers mimed the action [539]
of men struggling together, beating each other with throwing sticks, or [535]
casting spears.

In the middle of this performance, *Katopi*, the son of the dead man, rushed into the forest beating himself with a throwing stick, followed by his step-mother, *Dominao*, who forcibly disarmed him. At the conclusion of the dance, and when quiet was restored, *Nilituma* carried out the same jabiru [535] dance we had seen at the Bathurst Island *ilania* a few days previously (Pl. 29A). At the conclusion of the jabiru dance the Bathurst Islanders retired to paint themselves for the final rituals. In general, the "workers" painted the leading *pukamuni* men, some husbands painted their wives, their children and themselves.

In the late afternoon, the assembled men, women and children, their faces [302] and bodies painted with the most elaborate designs, and decorated with colourful *pukamuni* ornaments (frontispiece), made their way along the road, calling continuously in the high-pitched mosquito call until within a hundred yards of the grave. At that point the two groups separated. Each group lit a fire and carried out, first the rite of *wandiatapinda*, followed by a basket dance (later to be performed at the grave side (Pl. 26C), then went to their respective *milimikas* (Fig. 4A, B).

Pausing only to assemble at those places, both groups of people rushed across the open space and threw themselves on the bushes covering the grave, wailing heart-brokenly. *Katopi*, the son of the dead man, who fell on the belongings of his father at the base of a tree (Pl. 24D), tried to cut his head with a knife, but was restrained, as before, by his step-mother, *Dominao*, who led him back to the Bathurst Island *milimika*. This was a signal for every-one to return to their respective *milimikas* and perform the first of a series of dances.

In the Bathurst Island circle, *Nangrinini* danced a canoe dance, padd- [535] ling and bailing a miniature bark canoe as he pushed it along the ground.

As the Melville Island group were chanting their songs, five men sneaked up to the grave, one of their number peered among the bushes, crawled back to his crouching companions and whispered something to them. At this they all called out loudly, ran back into their *milimika* and carried out a vigorous, [535] almost hysterical dance.

The same performance was repeated, but on the second occasion *Marawani*, one of the chief mourners, ran to the grave, speared it in several places, 765 then, with the group, returned quietly to their companions among the poles.[77]

(*b*) *The Songs and Dances*[78]

On the return to *milimika* A (Fig. 4), *Wurarbuti* and his wife mimed, to the accompaniment of appropriate songs, paddling a canoe, with their hands around one of the poles. This was followed by a man and his wife, who acted, [396] with considerable detail, the making of a bark canoe; stripping the bark from the tree; holding the bark over a fire to make it flexible; folding the bark and sewing the ends together, and the final launching.

By the time this act was over, it was dark. The aborigines from both *milimikas* retired to the nearby forest, lit their fires and cooked their food. There were no ceremonies during the evening, except, occasionally, some woman left her camp and wailed among the deserted *pukamuni* poles.

533 539 765 About 8 o'clock on the morning of the last day, the *pukamuni* men opened the ceremonies with the honey and mosquito calls. These calls were followed by a number of songs, chanted by *Wurarbuti* and some of his companions, which referred to the mythical boobook owl-man, *Purugikini*, and the instructions he gave to his fellow performers at the first *kulama* ceremony (p. 123). They were:

> "Make the *milimika* large and clean for many people and when it is ready, sing first, then dance round the ring."
>
> "You will paint yourself beside the *milimika*."
>
> "When you decorate yourself for the *kulama*, put white on one side of your face, yellow on the other, and red down the middle of your hair. And as you dance, your wives will help you, as my wife, *Pintoma*, the owl-woman, once did for me."
>
> "You sing, *Mikinatrina*[79] (a *kulama* initiate), and we will follow."
>
> "When you sing in a *kulama*, put the cockatoo feathers, *primitiki*, in your hair, and the wind will shake them."

While those songs were being chanted, other men mimed the appropriate action.

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[77] Although the aborigines did not explain the ritual, it is likely that the first man looked for and thought he saw the *mopaditi* of *Waniamperi*. On the second occasion, *Munawani*, a near relative, hunted the dead man's spirit away. This ritual, in a modified [114] form, took place at the two other *pukumunis* we witnessed. Spencer (1928, p. 648) mentions the same ritual.

[78] The songs and dances in this series were neither traditional nor totemic. They were composed usually by a number of performers, especially for the occasion, and quite an amount of thought went into their production.

[79] During the initiation of the *Mikinatrina* at the *kulama* ceremony, he performs his first dance amid general applause.

During this performance an old man, *Nalauri*, *Waniamperi's* brother, 765
reprimanded, in the native tongue, a group of young aborigines for not 626
taking a more active part in the *pukamuni* rituals.

"Don't hang around there like a mob of whites," he said. "If you're standing while there's a dance, beat your buttocks, or if you're sitting, either clap your hands or beat the ground with a stick."

At the conclusion of the Melville Island performance, the Bathurst 533
Islanders continued the songs and dances in their own *milimika* (Fig. 4a), 539
about *Purutjikini* and the first *kulama*. 765

The leader, *Jibunglialumi*, chanted how, at the first *kulama*, *Purutjikini* said to his companions, "I'll give you the songs, then you'll dance about the things around you." As he did so, *Nangrinini* performed the dance of the turtle. "Then as the next song was being chanted," *Purutjikini* said, "you will cook the *kulama*." Another man picked up a *pukamuni* basket, and, calling "*brr*, *brr*, *brr*" (as they do in the *kulama* ceremonies), emptied the supposed contents on the ground in imitation of pouring out the *kulama* yams preparatory to putting them in the earth oven (p. 137). *Jibunglialumi* then followed with the dance of the owl man, *Purutjikini*, with his hands held around his eyes (Pl. 29a), ending his dance with "*Ah*, *oo*, *ah*, *oo*", the call of the present-day boobook owl.

The Melville and Bathurst Island groups then moved from the distant to the grave side of their burial poles (Fig. 4) and performed the *pumuti* rituals. On this occasion, however, only husbands and wives beat each other.

The *pumuti* was followed by *Urumatjina* from Melville Island, chanting a song he had composed for the occasion which described how the dead man, *Waniamperi* had become involved in a fight at a *pukamuni* ceremony.[illegible]

Some men, listening intently to *Urumatjina*, joined in as soon as they had learned the song, while others performed the dance miming the action of men fighting.

Another part of the same song told how a woman, *Purpurangmio* (since dead) loudly abused the men because so many of them attacked her husband at one time. To add reality to the performance, *Urumatjina* pounded the side of a *pukamuni* basket with a stick to indicate the noise made by the angry woman (Pl. 26b).

The theme of the songs then returned to the *kulama* ceremony. As some 765
men chanted, others laid sheets of paper-bark on the ground, and to the *kulama* thunder-call they imitated the actions of rubbing the *kulama* yam on

---

[illegible] This is the same fight as the one enacted in the Bathurst Island *ilania* on the previous day (p. 83).

765 their bodies (p. 138). Again, a man picked up a *pukamuni* basket, symbolised the pouring out of the cooked *kulama* yam on a sheet of bark and patted it to the *kulama* call of "*Brr, brr, brr*". This action completed the dance.

(c) *The Payment of the Workers*

431 While other dances, which I did not see, were being performed in the two *milimikas*, the *pukamuni* men and their wives unpacked the gifts for the
765 "workers", and spread them out on the ground (Pl. 26a). There was much good-natured discussion about their equitable distribution before the presents were finally separated into lots and placed one on the top of each pole.

177 *Wurarbuti*, resplendent in his body paint and coloured *pukamuni* orna-
533 ments, mounted one of the larger poles and chanted songs telling how he
765 became possessed of the great wealth which enabled him to buy the presents
[302] for the "workers".

> "I am a big Government man," he boasted, "so I was able to get plenty
> [539] of money."
>
> "I stole the money from the Government to pay for the presents and the police locked me up."

[535] While *Wurarbuti* chanted this song, *Marawani* and the women danced with their hands crossed as if in handcuffs.

As the song continued, *Marawani* ran after *Pulanimbuwi*, dragged him into the *milimika*, and struggled with him in imitation of a policeman making an arrest.

Other songs were chanted ridiculing a Government clerk at Darwin, while one of them "wrote" out an order, passed the "money" to a *pukamuni* man through a window (an opening in a pole) and then demanded, in a loud domineering voice, his thumb-print on a scrap of paper as a receipt.

177′ *Wurarbuti*, still seated on the top of a pole, started to distribute the
431 presents, imitating, as he did so, the actions and broken English which the same clerk used when dealing with aborigines.

765 "You a worker," said *Wurarbuti*. "Have you a wife? How many children? You work for me, make proper good pole, I pay you."

The "worker" on accepting his payment, put his thumb-print on a scrap of paper (initialled—with a twig—by another *pukamuni* man), and walked away satisfied[81] with his square of printed calico, pipes and tobacco. As each "worker" received his gift the *pukamuni* men performed a dance.

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[81] This is not always so. Sometimes a "worker" becomes so annoyed over inadequate payment that he will not allow his pole to be carried to the grave, preferring to let it rot in the forest. On several occasions we saw a pole which had been left in the forest because its maker was dissatisfied with the payment.

When all the "workers" had been paid, *Wurarbuti* called my name and 431
presented me with a number of *pukamuni* arm and chest ornaments (Pl. 31), 765
which normally would have been left on the grave.
123

These ornaments, *Wurarbuti* explained, were a gift from the dead man, *Waniamperi*, because I had assisted in making his *pukamuni* a success.[88]

In the Bathurst Island *milimika* the three "workers" were also receiving 765
their payments.

Jibunglialumi, although he did not have as good a story to tell as *Wurarbuti*, [535]
danced around the poles with some of the presents in his hand, singing, "Here [539]
I come in an expensive motor-car, with lots of money to pay the 'workers' [177]
for cutting such beautiful poles."[89]

(*d*) *Erecting the Poles around the Graves*

The distribution of the last of the presents was a signal for the "workers" 765
to carry the poles from the respective *milimikas* to the grave.

Some of the poles were both large and heavy; in particular that illustrated on Pl. 34D, which was eighteen feet long, and so heavy that it took seven "workers" to carry it from the *milimika* and up-end it in the hole prepared for it at the grave (Pl. 26A).

As the poles were carried past the Bathurst Island ceremonial ground, *Jibunglialumi* threw short sticks over them to commemorate the time when the skinny fish, *Pipinjawari*, took part in a spear-throwing contest at the *pukamuni* of *Purukupali* (p. 33).

While the "workers" nonchalantly carried the poles to the grave, the 765
women, with tears running down their cheeks, beat themselves with sticks 785
(until someone restrained them), and the close male relatives, mourning
loudly, hysterically cut their heads with steel knives.

Katopi, the son of the dead man, had washed the painted decorations from his body, and was about to cut his head when he was stopped by his step-mother, *Dominae*. On seeing this, *Marawani*, one of the chief *pukamuni* men, took the knife from the woman and gave it to *Katopi*, who gashed his head two or three times, and, with blood pouring down his face, threw himself on the ground in a paroxysm of grief.

---

[88] To help them in their payments I had given the *pukamuni* men some printed calico.

[89] Although these stories about great wealth to pay the "workers" are much Europeanised, they are probably following a traditional pattern, when, instead of referring to money and the goods of the white man, the ceremonial leaders exaggerated the number of spears, ornaments, and other goods they had collected to pay the "workers".

(c) *The Final Mourning Rituals*

765 As soon as the poles were in place the "workers" pulled away the bushes covering the grave. This was a signal for the closing phases of the final rituals. Everyone, men and women, from both Melville and Bathurst Islands, rushed forward and threw themselves on top of one another at the base of the burial poles, until the ground, and even the grave itself, was covered with a mass of human beings, each mourning heartbrokenly.

After a period of mourning, *Jibungfialumi* and *Wurarbuti* rose to their [302] feet, cut off the beards they had grown for the occasion,[84] and washed the painted decorations from their bodies, while the mourners, assembling close [535] to the poles, impersonated, in almost hysterical dance and song, the shark, the rain-woman, the jabiru, and many other mythical heroes of creation times.

Nangrinini, assisted by his wife, first performed the basket dance (Pl. 26c),[85] then once more the dance of the bark canoe. *Pulanimbuwi*, who danced beside him, acted the part of *Jirakati* (Pl. 30J), the sea-eagle, swooping down on its prey.

The return of the ceremonial leaders to the grave was the signal for another exhibition of mass hysteria. Weeping women, beating themselves with sticks, threw themselves on the top of the grave, while men, leaning over the burial poles, mourned continuously in high-pitched wails.

Gradually the sounds of lamentation became less. One by one the mourners left, until there remained only the crouching body of *Waniamperi's* widow, painted entirely in black, a little wizened woman, whose span of life was almost spent.

(2) *The Final Pukamuni of Makapini*

(a) *The Opening Rituals*

[302] A little before sunset, the Melville Island men and women assembled to decorate themselves for the final rituals, while *Kitapipatu* (Pl. 27A), a sister of the dead woman, *Makapini*, carrying a long stick, and painted entirely in white, wandered among the *pukamuni* people, crying the *amburu* song.

[184] The body decorations finished, which neither took as long, nor were as elaborate as at the *pukamuni* of *Waniamperi*, the performers assembled about twenty yards from the three burial poles (Pl. 34A, B, F), which the "workers" had hidden from view by a screen of boughs.

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[177] [84] Before the days of the white man, the Tiwi men did not cut their beards at the final *pukamuni*, but plucked them out in handfuls. Spencer, 1928, p. 673, Fig. 467, both illustrates and records having seen this curious ritual in the *kulama* ceremony.

[85] Mountford, 1956, p. 434.

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302

[p. 88 A]

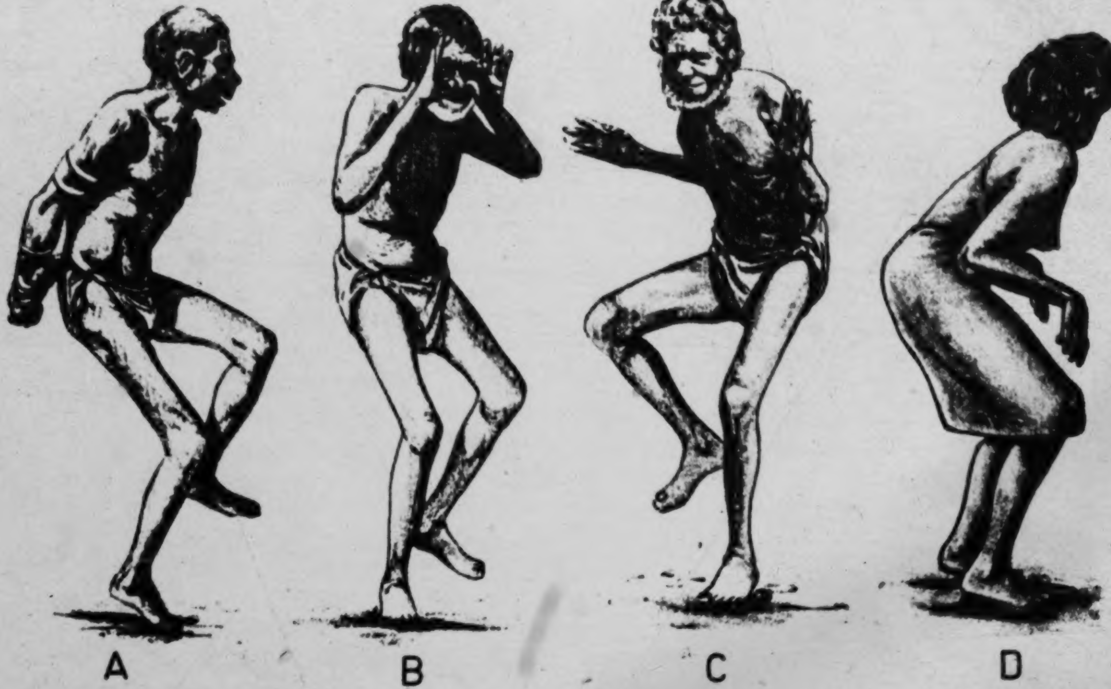

Plate 29. *Totemic Dances*
A, Jabiru, Tjalati; B, Owl, Pintoma; C, Lizard, Kilpuruni; D, Frog, Kwouk-kwouk.

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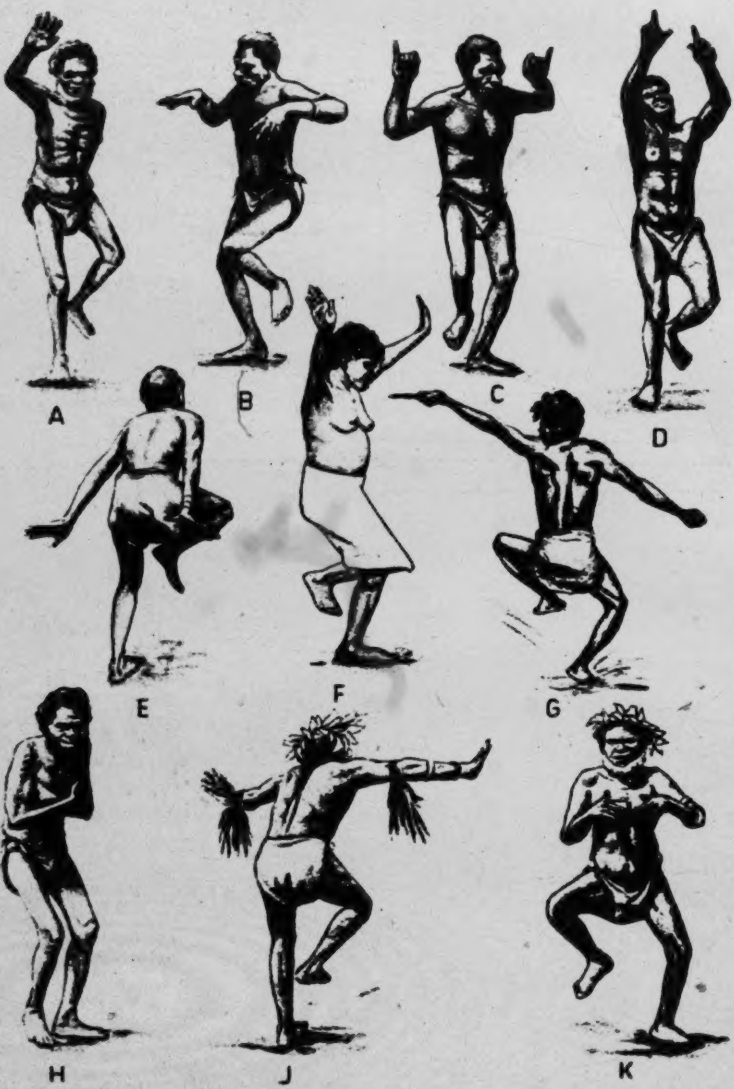

PLATE 30. *Totemic Dances*
A, Moon; B, Rain; C, Flying Fox; D, Wild Honey; E, Crocodile; F, Amburu; G, Shark; H, Skinny Fish; J, Sea-eagle; K, Ningaui.

[p. 88 B]

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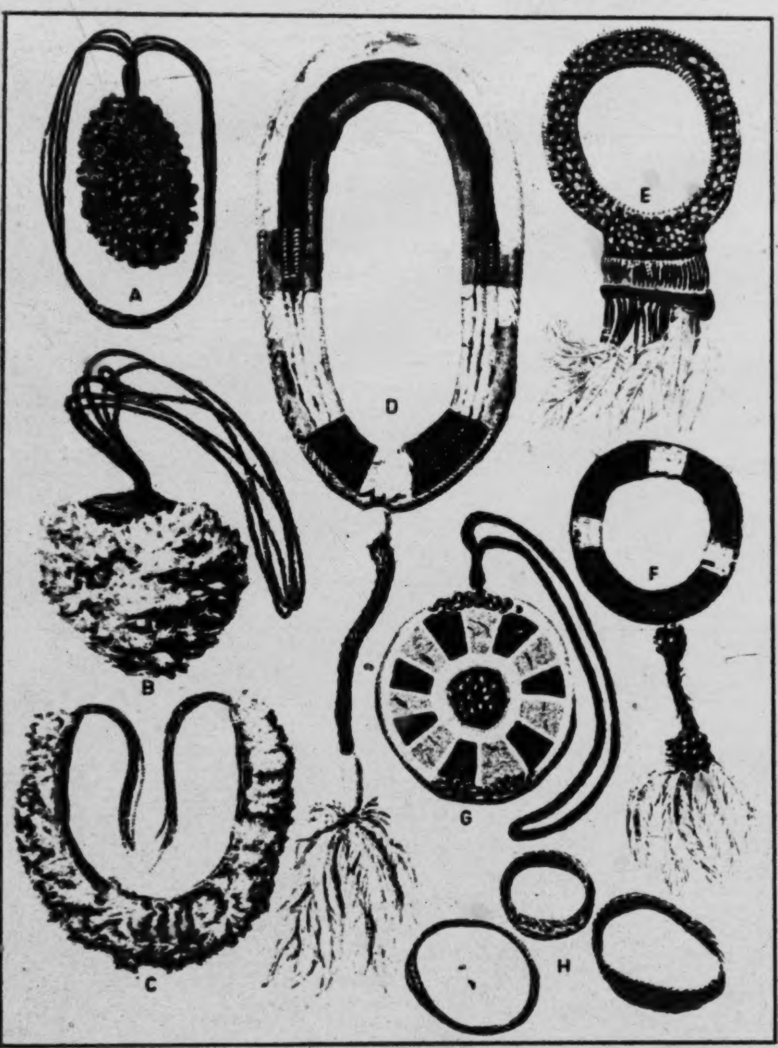

PLATE 31. *Ceremonial Decorations*
A, D, G, Chest Ornaments, Pukabinda; B, Goose-feather Ball, Tokwianga; C, False Beard, Bal[illegible]di; E, F, Arm Ornaments, Palmatjinas; H, Cane Arm Bands, Jairinis.

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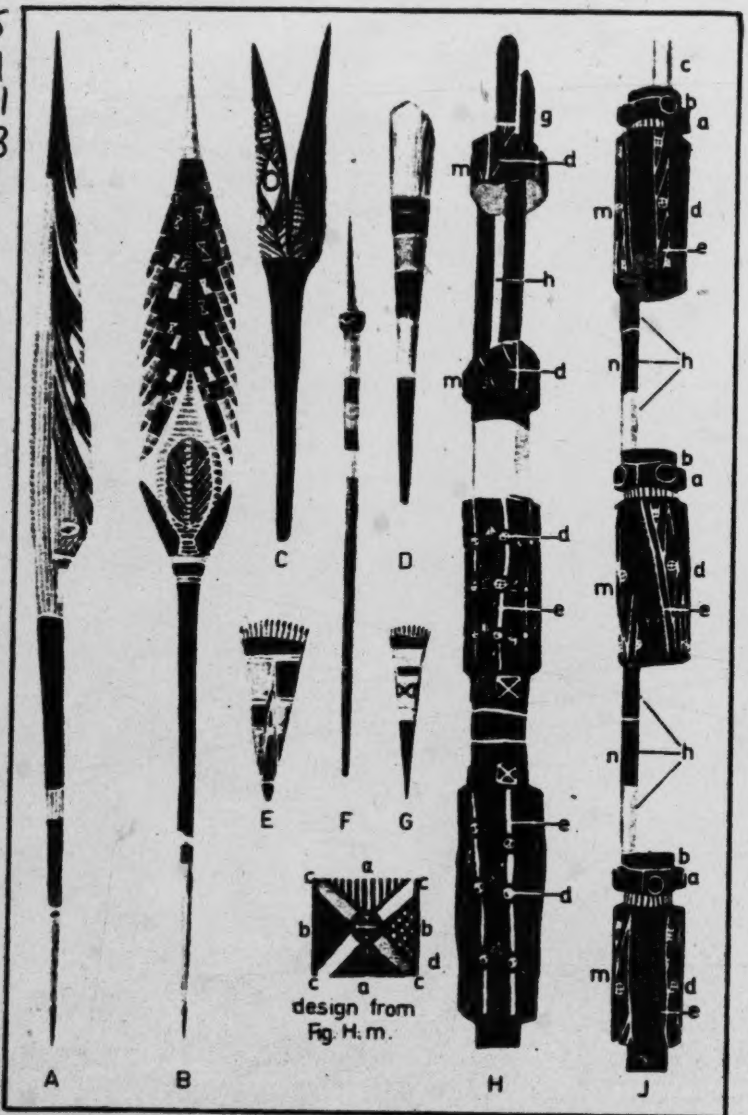
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PLATE 32. *Ceremonial Objects and Burial Poles*
A, Male Pukamuni Spear, Tunkaringa; B, Female Pukamuni Spear, Tunkaguni; C, Forked Throwing Stick, Miluanta; D, Plain Throwing Stick, Muruguna; E, G, Tool, Porta, for Body Painting; F, Scratching Stick, Murubunga; H, J, Pukamuni Burial Poles.

[p. 88 D]

The ceremony opened with the honey call, then, as the men stepped 765
across a fire lit in the centre of the *milimika* (Pl. 24B), a long sustained
mosquito call. Following this, the men formed a circle around the fire, and [533]
chanted a song which described the bombing of a ship off the coast of [177]
Bathurst Island.

Close female relatives, standing in a line facing the poles, sang the *amburu*, while three men, painted white, each carrying a spear, rushed toward the screen of boughs, peered through them, then returned to the *milimika*. Three other men were given spears, one of whom, with a *tokwianga* (goose-feather ball) in his mouth, took a stand as if to throw a spear at the poles, remarking to his companions as he did so, that he was about to spear a *mopaditi*.

As soon as the "workers" removed the boughs which shielded the poles from view, an old woman, *Jibandaui*, ran forward and beat the ground near the poles, while the six men, with spears poised ready, followed and stabbed around the base of the poles. These rituals, the signal for all the participants to rush to the grave poles and (Pl. 27B) mourn, were carried out to frighten the *mopaditis* from the vicinity of the grave.

A young man with his head and shoulders through an opening in one of the poles, and his arm around an old woman, sobbed bitterly (Pl. 27C) while others stood around either crying or singing the *amburu*.

As the sounds of grief became less, a young man, miming a killing which had taken place some time ago, sneaked up with great stealth, and "speared" *Tjamalampua* who was lying on the ground in the *milimika*.[88] Shortly afterwards the ceremony closed with the usual honey and mosquito calls.

(*b*) *Songs and Dances*

The next morning about 10 a.m., the ceremonies started afresh. On this 177
occasion, all of the songs and dances dealt with secular incidents; a crocodile 765
creeping upon a man to kill him, an aboriginal sailing a European racing boat, [533]
another paddling a bark canoe, still another spearing an enemy, and so on.

Several of the aborigines created much laughter by miming the actions of [123]
our physical anthropologist, Dr. Carleton Coon, who had just completed a
series of body measurements and observations on the Melville Islanders. [535]

One man, using a short stick, measured the arms, legs and body of old *Tjamalampua* as he lay stretched out full length on the ground; he then danced around the *milimika* with his hands round his head, in imitation of the head callipers; another mimed Dr. Coon weighing an aboriginal, cutting his hair and looking at his teeth.

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[88] Spencer, 1928, p. 651, describes a similar episode. No doubt the spearing of *Tjamalampua* had a much deeper symbolism than appeared at the time.

765 533 *Wurarbuti* described, in song and dance, how some aborigines from the northern end of the island had tried to kill his father, but the father, being forewarned, had run into the mangrove swamp for shelter. A spear, however, thrown by his enemies, hit him in the side but did not kill him.

[535] [177] Then followed a long series of songs and dances, made up by *Wurarbuti*, describing how the mechanics from Darwin erected a large steel tank at the nearby settlement. To the chanting of songs and beating of buttocks, the actors "rolled" the tank (actually a small log) along the ground, tilted it on one end, rigged blocks and tackle and lifted the "tank" in place. These dances lasted about a half an hour.

Toward the end of this performance, which finished about mid-day, a woman, *Narlaui*, painted entirely in white, and carrying a throwing stick, called upon the dead woman to fight her because, at one time she, *Narlaui*, had reprimanded her for running after men. The aborigines applauded her when she had finished her song. Emboldened by this, *Narlaui* stood in front of one of the poles and challenged the dead woman to a fight.

[535] [177] The ceremony finished[87] with an aeroplane dance, the men posturing in a similar manner to that of the *Jirakati* dance (Pl. 30J).

About sunset, the rituals started afresh with the usual honey and mosquito calls.

Pulanimbuwi and *Muramajua*, acting the part of little children, struggled with each other in the dust of the *milimika* while one of them sang,

> [539] "You can't drink from the same breast as I can because we have different mothers."

Old *Malumerinita*, taking up the same refrain, pushed the two "children" aside as he sang,

> [539] "I'm a big man, so I'll drink the milk."

(c) *The Payment of the Workers*

765 It was after dark before the three "workers", who had cut and painted the burial poles, received their payment (Pl. 27D). As each *pukamuni* man passed the goods, loin cloths, and tobacco to the "worker", he cut his head with a knife, and [535] [868] started a dance in which even a number of little girls took part (Pl. 25A). They had been told by some of the older women what to do, so that the youngsters would be conversant with the woman's place in the rituals.

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[87] This ceremony would have probably, like that of *Waniamperi*, finished at mid-day had not the Superintendent of the settlement insisted on sending the chief woman mourner to a distant locality from which she had been unable to return on time.

(d) *The Final Mourning Rituals*

By this time the chief woman mourner, painted entirely in red, had arrived. 765
On reaching the ceremonial ground, she charged against a pole, then leaned [302]
over it, crying heartbrokenly. Another woman, *Dominao*, in paroxysms of
grief, threw herself on the ground at the base of another pole, while still
another woman, dancing the *amburu* before the third pole, told the *mopaditi* [533]
of the dead woman, in a song "to keep away from me". [775]

The ceremony finished, like that of *Waniamperi's pukamuni*, with concerted wailing around the poles.

(3) *The Pukamuni of Inbidjarmeri's Infant*

This simplified *pukamuni* was held for a premature child of *Inbidjarmeri*. 766
The child died, about a month previously, at the Darwin hospital. The complete rituals, though curtailed, having occupied only two hours, followed the normal pattern with two exceptions. The *pukamuni* group did not employ any "workers" to cut the burial poles, and, as the body had not been brought to Melville Island, the ceremonies were held at the grave of a young child, of the same parents, who had died about two years previously.

A distant relative, appointed by the father of a "worker" had burnt the grass, cleared a space adjacent to the grave as a dancing ground and draped a turtle rope around the old poles in which had been twisted the wing feathers of geese.[89] For these duties he was given two loin cloths.

There were no dances at the first *ilania* which took place about three hundred yards from the burial site, only prolonged honey and mosquito calls.

The *pukamuni* group then moved to within a hundred yards of the grave where, after more honey and mosquito calls, they lit the *wandiatapinda* fire, and walked through its smoke and flames.

At the commencement of the final rituals, most of the group halted behind a rope, stretched between two trees, over which the "worker" had hung bagging and blankets;[90] but others rushed forward, spears in hand, and, as in the two previous *pukamunis*, stabbed at the base of the poles surrounding the grave to drive away the *mopaditis*.

After this, everyone moved to the grave-side of the screen, the men carry- 535
ing out a series of dances while the women, beating themselves with sticks, 765
leaned on the *pukamuni* poles and mourned.
533

While some of the *pukamuni* men chanted a song about the red-fruited eugenia, *binamia*, *Muramajua*, walking around the *milimika*, imitated a

---

[89] I did not find out the significance of this custom.

[90] This took the place of the screen of boughs used in the normal rituals.

533 woman picking up the fruit and putting it in a bark basket. Then, bending
535 over, as if carrying a heavy load, he danced around the *milimika* to the
766 rhythm of the song and the beating sticks.

The rituals continued by the *pukamuni* men chanting a series of songs, first
[177] about a boat, then its propeller, its sails and, finally, about the raising of its
anchor. During the chanting, one or more aborigines, dancing to the rhythm of the songs, mimed the relevant actions.

766 These dances being finished, the participants of the *pukamuni*, putting their arms around the posts, cried the *amburu*, the mourning song; the men gave the honey and mosquito call, and the burial rituals were over.[90]

6. THE FACIAL DECORATIONS

302 The facial and body decorations of the men and women of the Tiwi, particularly those used during the final *pukamuni* rituals are, by far, the most colourful and elaborate of those used by any Australian aboriginal tribe.

During the early days of the century these decorations attracted the atten-
[114] tion of Basedow (1913, pp. 291–321); Klaatsch (1907, p. 589), and Spencer (1928, p. 669), although nobody, of more recent years, has shown any interest in them.

Although there is little doubt that the desire for artistic expression and
[775] personal beautification are factors behind this practice,[91] the fundamental idea
[517] is that of camouflage, i.e., that the designs will so conceal the identity of the
men and women taking part in the ceremony, that the *mopaditis*, who are present at both the *pukamuni* and *kulama*, will not recognize them.

So at both the *ilanias* and the final rituals of the *pukamuni*, everyone, even the little children who look on, is decorated. At the *ilanias*, however, which are performed every evening for some weeks, the decorations are usually simple and often crudely applied. Nevertheless, the aborigines, believing the
[775] *mopaditis* to be stupid folk and easily misled, consider these simple decorations are an adequate safeguard.[92]

Pl. 28 illustrates a number of facial designs. Most of the originals of these
[126] illustrations are colour photographs. Some, however, are based on crayon drawings[93] which my informants made to show the designs they would use for certain totems.

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[90] See p. 61 for beliefs in the *mopaditis* of a small child.

[832] [91] The men claimed that when their face and body decorations were good, the women were attracted to them.

[92] Mountford, 1956, p. 437, illustrates a small child decorated at an *ilania*.

[93] The illustrations based on crayon drawings are, Pl. 28A, B, C, D.

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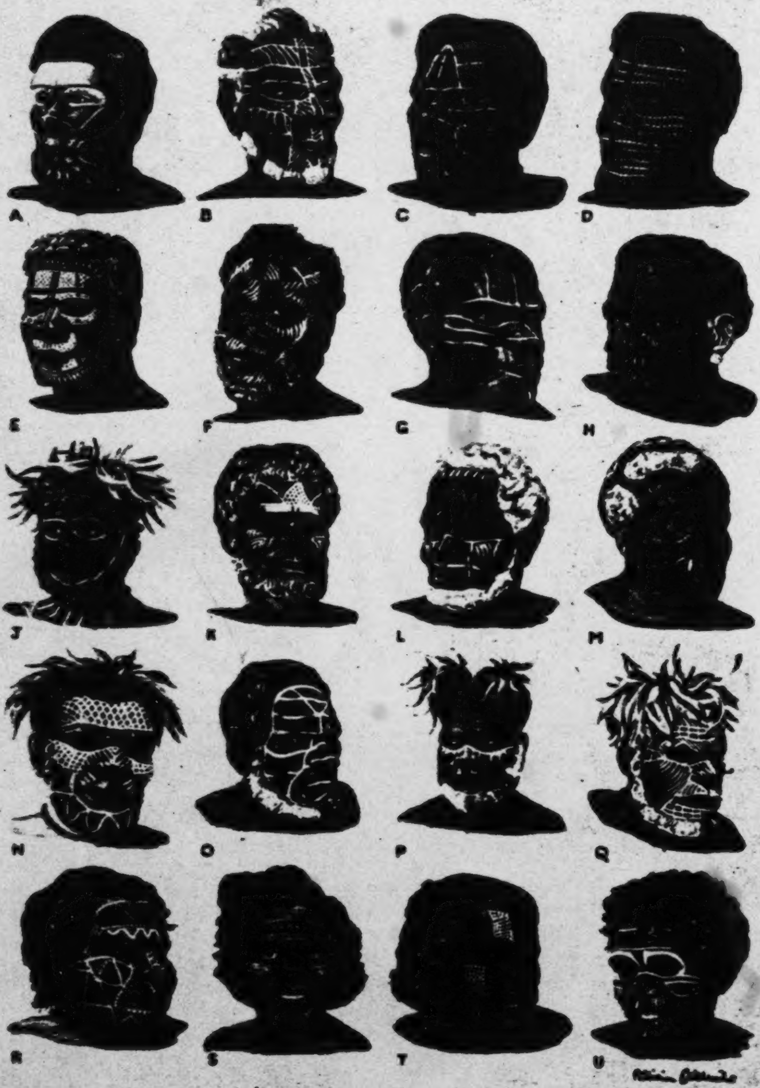

PLATE 28. *Ceremonial Facial Decorations*

A, Wadjeniati Initiate; B, Water-snake, Tuluma; C, Shark, Tuduwala; D, Fish, Mungumini; E, Thunder-man, Pakadringa; F, Salmon, Kumuninu; G, March-fly, Kudjatumpi; H, Boobook-owl, Purutjikini; J, Barn-owl, Pintoma; O, Ningaui. K, L, M, N, P, Q, R, S, T, U, Unidentified.

[Analyst's note: the plate in the original text is in full color]

[FACING P. 92]

All the facial designs, about which I was able to find out the meanings 302
(except Pl. 28B), dealt with some totemic creature, or myth. This was in 778
direct contrast to the designs painted on the *tudini* burial poles, where few, [531]
if any, were associated with the myths or the totemic places.

A Wadjeniati Initiate

Pl. 28A is the facial design of a *Wadjeniati* initiate in the *kulama* ceremony [881]
(p. 130). The white dots represent a white edible plum, *murumbatana*, the red dots, a small red fruit, *kupalitju*, and the lines, the limbs of the trees on which the fruit grew. The white around the eyes and on the forehead is symbolical of *Purutjikini*, the boobook owl-man (*Ninox novae-zealandiae*), the leader of the second *kulama* ceremony.

The Poisonous Water Snake, Tuluma

Pl. 28B, a facial *pukamuni* design, symbolizes the markings on the skin of a poisonous water snake, *tuluma*. Although I neglected to ask the aborigines whether there was any myth associated with this facial decoration, it is likely that the design refers to an incident in creation times.

The Shark, Tuduwala

At *Purukupali's pukamuni*, the shark-man, *Tuduwala*, represented on Pl. 28C, painted his face so that he would appear as ferocious as possible. The radiating lines round his eyes were supposed to have added greatly to his savage
appearance. After the *pukamuni*, *Tuduwala* fought with *Kumuninu*, the salmon [773]
man, because the latter, although he had a large number of hair-belts, refused to give any to *Tuduwala*.

Although the shark-man escaped injury in that encounter, he wounded the fish-man a number of times with his throwing sticks, wounds which can still be seen, as parallel lines, on the head of the salmon (see Pl. 28F).

The Fish, Mungumini

Pl. 28D is a facial design, called *Mungumini*, worn at the *pukamuni* of *Purukupali* by a fish of the same name. The markings on the face are supposed to be similar to those on the head of the present-day fish.

The Thunder-man, Pakadringa

Pl. 28E, a *pukamuni* facial design, refers to the man of the thunderstorms, *Pakadringa*, and the dangerous *Maratji* (p. 154), both of whom are closely associated in the myths.

302 778 The yellow bands encircling the face and eyes, and stretching from the forehead to the base of the nose, all symbolize the dreaded *Maratji*; the white cross-hatching represents the thunderstorms of *Pakadringa*.

The Salmon, Kumuninu

Pl. 28F, the *pukamuni* decorations on the face of an aboriginal, are the same as those used by the mythical salmon-man, *Kumuninu*, who, at the first *pukamuni* ceremony, fought with *Tudawala*, the shark-man (Pl. 28c). The present-day fish still carries the marks of that encounter on his head.

The March-fly, Kudjatumpi

Pl. 28o is the facial pattern of an aboriginal belonging to the March-fly totem of Kudjatumpi, southern Melville Island (p. 58).

The black discs symbolize dark-coloured stones which formed on the footprints of *Kudjatumpi*, the small white and yellow dots, an edible plum, *murumbatana*, and the white lines, the limbs of the tree on which the fruit grows.

The red lines in the design represent the strata of red rocks at Kudjatumpi, which were created when the woman squeezed the milk from her breast and allowed it to run down the face of the cliff. All these things happened at Kudjatumpi after the March-fly woman had returned from the *pukamuni* of *Purukupali*.

The Boobook Owl, Purutjikini

The design on Pl. 28H was used in one of the *ilanias*. The white ears refer to *Purutjikini* the boobook owl, and the lines on the face to its feather patterns.

The Barn Owl, Pintoma

Pl. 28J is the facial decorations of *Wurarbuti*, the *alouwia* of the *pukamuni* ceremony of *Waniamperi*. He is wearing the false beard, *baludi*, and the head-dress of cockatoo feathers, *primitiki*. The design on his face, particularly the rings around his eyes, symbolize *Pintoma*, the barn-owl woman, who assisted her husband, *Purutjikini*, the boobook owl-man, at the first *kulama* ceremony (see dance of *Pintoma*, Pl. 29B and frontispiece).

The Ningaui Men

The facial design on Pl. 28 o resembles that used by the *Ningaui* men when they performed the second *kulama* ceremony on Turiturina Island (p. 124). [262] The yellow dots are the cockles in the mangrove swamps on Western Bathurst Island, one of the foods of the present-day *Ningauis*.

Unidentified

The designs on Pl. 28T are the same as those painted on the face of the 302
chief mourner, *Kasapi*, at *Waniamperi's* final *pukamuni*. I did not ask about 778
their meanings.

Although I did not learn the meanings of the facial designs on the remaining faces on Pl. 28, it is reasonable to suppose they all referred to some mythological story, probably associated with the totem of the aboriginal who wore them.

7. THE PUKAMUNI DANCES

A number of the dances we saw at the *ilanias* and final *pukamuni* rituals [794]
belonged exclusively to certain Tiwi totemic groups. They were so constant 765
in form that, in no time, we could recognize the dance and the totem to which 535
it belonged.

Many of these dances are more strenuous than any belonging to the mainland; some of them, indeed, so strenuous, i.e., the crocodile (Pl. 30E), the shark (Pl. 30O), or the sea-eagle (Pl. 30J), that they seldom lasted more than a minute. [171]

Although I recorded only fourteen of these totemic dances (illustrated on Pls. 29 and 30), I feel sure that these represent but a small proportion of those performed by the Tiwi. For instance, none of the totemic dances belonging to the dead person would have been performed at the burial rituals we witnessed.

Pl. 29A is the dance of the jabiru, *Tjalati*, which was performed with such skill and abandon by *Nilituna* at the Bathurst Island *ilania* of *Waniamperi's* *pukamuni* ceremony.

Pl. 29B is the dance of the boobook owl, *Purutjikini*, who with his wife, the barn-owl, *Pintoma*, organized the second *kulama* ceremony on Turiturina Island, western Bathurst Island. The dancer is indicating the large eyes of the boobook owl.

Pl. 29C is the dance of the blanket-lizard, *Kilpuruni*, who was punished by *Jurumu*, the wedge-tailed eagle, because the former seduced *Jurumu's* wife. The dancer walked around the ceremonial ground with an awkward gait, in imitation of the blanket-lizard's curious method of locomotion.

Pl. 29D pictures the frog-woman, *Kwouk-kwouk*, who is the mother of the man of the thunderstorms, *Pakadringa*, the woman of the monsoon rain, *Tomituka*, and the lightning woman, *Bumerali*. The frog dance was performed many times at the *ilanias* of *Waniamperi*, the frog being the totem of his father.

535 765 Pl. 30A is the moon-man, *Tjapara*, who fought with *Purukupali* during the creation period. The bent, upraised arm of the dancer symbolizes the crescent moon.

Pl. 30B is the dance of the rain-woman, *Tomituka*, who lives at Wailu with her brother, sister and her mother, the frog-woman, *Kwouk-kwouk*. The fingers pointing downward symbolize the falling rain.

Pl. 30C illustrates the dance of the flying-fox, *Muranginpili*, whose totemic place is at Kaialili lagoon, southern Melville Island. This dance was frequently performed at the *ilanias* of *Nulatini*, her father being a flying-fox man. The dancer, with high steps, moved his arms alternately up and down, with the little fingers pointing upward.

Pl. 30D is the dance of wild honey. In this dance the performer, dancing vigorously around the ceremonial ground, pointed upward, as if to indicate the position of a hive of wild bees.

Pl. 30E is the spirited dance of the crocodile, *Jirakupai*, who, during creation times, transformed himself into a crocodile to escape his enemies. This was not often performed in the burial ceremonies we witnessed.

Pl. 30F is the *amburu*, the women's dance of mourning. When the men are performing in the ceremonial circle, the women come in from the left-hand side performing the *amburu*. I did not collect any specific myth about this dance, except that it has been performed by the women ever since the *pukamuni* of *Purukupali*.

Pl. 30G is the dance of the shark, *Tudawali*, probably the most strenuous dance in aboriginal Australia. It is performed only by young men, women and children, the older men claiming that its performance requires too much effort.

Pl. 30H illustrates the dance of the skinny fish, *Pipinjawari*, who injured his spine while taking part in a spear-throwing contest held during the final *pukamuni* rituals of *Purukupali*. The dancer is miming the pain that *Pipinjawari* suffered on account of his injury.

Pl. 30J is an attractive and graceful dance symbolizing the sea-eagle, *Jirakati*, swooping down on its prey, with its wings outspread. This dance was performed many times at the *ilanias* of the woman, *Nulatini*.

Pl. 30K, the *Ningawi* dance, symbolizes the awkward gait and curious actions of these dwarf spirit people who live in the swamps of south-western Bathurst Island. This dance was performed with considerable skill and artistry by the leader of the Bathurst Island group, *Jibungfialumi*, at one of the *ilanias* of *Waniamperi*.

8. THE CEREMONIAL OBJECTS OF THE TIWI

The ceremonial objects of the *pukamuni* ceremony, like the carved and painted 301
burial poles and elaborate facial and body decorations already described, are 778
totally unlike those used by the mainland aborigines. 765

A series of objects obtained on the 1954 expedition is illustrated on Pls. 31, [171]
32.[88]

On Pl. 31, A, D, and G, are chest ornaments called *pukabinda*, which are suspended around the neck with a loop of human hair string. Fig. A is an [237] oval ball of the soft wax of the native bee, into which has been pressed a large number of the red and black seeds of a jungle vine. Fig. D, made of several ovals of lawyer vine, is bound together with strips of the same material. The pendant is made of human hair and white cockatoo feathers. The oval opening is too small to pass over the head, therefore this ornament, and similar examples which I saw, were suspended around the neck with string. Fig. G is a flat disc like Fig. D, with lengths of lawyer vine bound together. This disc was coated with wax, and further decorated with red and black jungle seeds.

Pl. 31E and F are ornaments, *palmatjinas*, decorated with red and black seeds, which are pushed up the arm over the elbow.[89] Both have been made in the same manner as Fig. D, G.

Pl. 31B is a goose-feather ball, *tokwianga*, worn around the neck or tied around the upper arm. *Wurarbuti* (frontispiece) is wearing a *tokwianga*.

These ornaments are made by embedding ends of the downy feathers of [237] the pied goose in a ball of wax. So much work was entailed in making a *tokwianga* that the aborigines were loth to part with them. The *tokwianga* is worn on all ceremonial occasions.

Pl. 31C is a false beard, *baludi*, which was worn at the *ilanias*, the final *pukamuni* (see frontispiece), and the *kulama* rituals. The *baludi* may be pure [302] decoration, or it may replace the beard, which up until comparatively recently was plucked out at both the *pukamuni* and *kulama* rituals.

Fig. H illustrates three cane arm rings, *jairinis*, made from plaited lawyer vine. These were worn on the upper and lower arms of the *pukamuni* men and women, and occasionally by other performers, as decoration. At the end of the burial ceremony the performers take these rings from their arms and leave them on the grave as a present for the spirit of the dead.

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[88] Spencer, 1928, Pl. XII, Figs. 450–4, illustrates a number of *pukamuni* ornaments he collected in 1911.

[89] Several of the men illustrated on Pl. 26a, are wearing these arm ornaments.

765 Pl. 32 illustrates a number of objects used in the *pukamuni* and *kulama*
778 rituals.

Pl. 32A, B, are two of the beautifully carved ceremonial spears known
[411] respectively as the male *pukamuni* spear, *tunkaringa*, and the female spear,
[531] *tunkaguni*. These are made purely as a gift to the dead, they appear to have no other function.

At the time of Spencer's visit to Melville Island during 1911, the aborigines
[114] told him that these spears were cut with cockle shells. During 1920 a Melville
[322] Island man in Darwin gave me the same information, adding that the making
[412] of a double-sided female spear, 32B, with shell tools occupied an old man about three months, and the single-sided male spear, 32A, about two.

Pl. 32C is the forked throwing stick, *miluanta*, with which *Tjapara*, the moon-man injured *Purukupali*, and 32D, the plain throwing stick, *muruguna*. These are used in the *kulama* and *pukamuni* rituals, as well as for hunting and in personal quarrels.

Pl. 32E, G, are two interesting tools called *portas*, used for printing lines
[302] of dots on the bodies of the men and women. The colour is crushed to a thin
[413] paste, spread on a flat rock, and the *porta* rocked backward and forward in the paint to load the *porta*. The *porta* is then rocked on the body printing a line of dots.[86]

[515] Pl. 32F is a curious ceremonial scratching stick used by the *Kilipaniati*
[413] *kulama* initiate to scratch himself during the period when he is not allowed to do so with his hands.

Pl. 32H, J, are two burial poles, *tudinis*, which were erected on the grave. These will be described in Section 10.

9. THE MESSAGE STICKS

202 Message sticks, under the general name of *purunkita*, are used by the Tiwi
765 for several purposes; personal requests to fellow tribesmen asking for presents or supplies (Fig. 5E); invitations to other groups to perform ceremonies (Fig. 5F, G, H), and in association with the *pukamuni* rituals.

When the ceremonial leader appointed the "workers" to cut the poles (p. 74), he also sent messengers carrying specially carved sticks (*purunkitas*) to each totemic group on Melville and Bathurst Islands, telling them when the final *pukamuni* rituals were about to start.

[301] As each messenger neared his destination he painted himself entirely in
[302] white and donned his goose-feather ball, *tokwionga*, his chest ornaments,

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[86] The lines of dots on *Wurarbuti* (frontispiece) were made with a *porta*.

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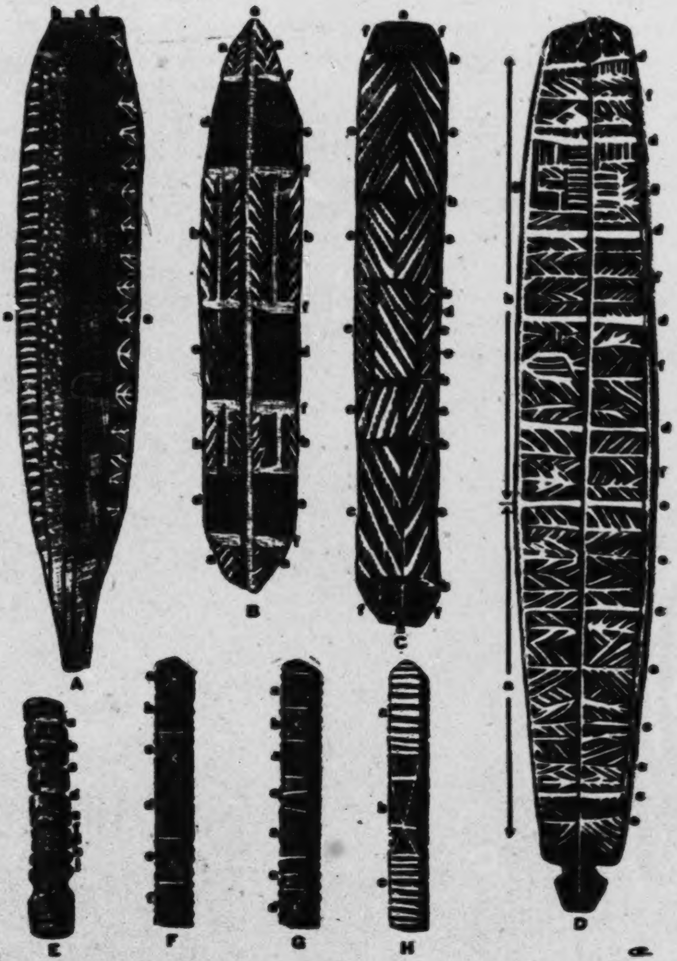

Fig. 5. *The Message Sticks*

A, Numaniaq; B, Pumubu; C, Murrungpi; D, Pirilou; E, Secular; F, G, H, Pukamuni Ceremonial.

202 765 *palmajinis*, and cane armlets, *jairinis*. Then, taking a female *pukamuni* spear, *tunkaguni*, in his hand he seated himself within sight of the camp.

[301] [302] The local aborigines went out to welcome him, but on seeing the message stick and hearing the news, they mourned hysterically, cutting their heads [785] and beating themselves with sticks.

When the mourning died down, the aborigines gave the messenger a meal, [574] after which he returned to his own camp.

Although the general distribution of the totemic *purunkitas* has been dis- [126] continued in recent years, the aborigines who knew them well, made nine [184] examples for me. It would seem that each totemic place had its own particular [794] design, for when I showed the *purunkita* (Fig. 7D) to old *Tjamalampua* and *Malumerinita*, neither of whom had seen it previously, they recognized it immediately as a message stick which would have been sent to the *Mudungkala* totemic group of Buchanan Island, at the southern entrance to Apsley Straits. However, other *purunkitas*, i.e. (Fig. 5C; Fig. 5F, G, H; and Fig. 6A, E) are still being used in the *pukamuni* rituals.

During the early days of our stay, when the *ilanias* of *Waniamperi's pukamuni* were about to start, three men, two of them, *Marawani* and *Uramatjina*, being the chief mourners, made a journey to the Bathurst Island people for the purpose of giving them a *purunkita* and telling them the news.

A few days later a Bathurst Island man returned with the message stick, Fig. 5F, G, H, and verbal instructions relating to the forthcoming burial rituals.

Although I did not see the message stick which *Marawani* and his com- [126] panions carried to Bathurst Island, I was able to make a rubbing of another (Fig. 7C), which was sent to the same locality on the death of *Pulanimbuwi's* wife.

Later, old *Tjamalampua* sent another message stick (Fig. 7A, B), to the men of the *Mudungkala* totem of Buchanan Island, asking for European goods and food to pay the "workers" at the final rituals of *Waniamperi's pukamuni*.

Notification of Death

202 The designs on message stick, Fig. 7C, which an aboriginal carried to the 211 Bathurst Island people, together with the news of the death of *Nulatini*, did x532 not, in any way, refer to the message that accompanied it, but to topographical details along the motor road between Snake Bay and Cockle Point on Apsley Straits.

The upper section, *d*, is the aboriginal camp at Snake Bay, and the indentations, *e*, *e*, are the rocks on its shores. The cross-hatched rectangle in the

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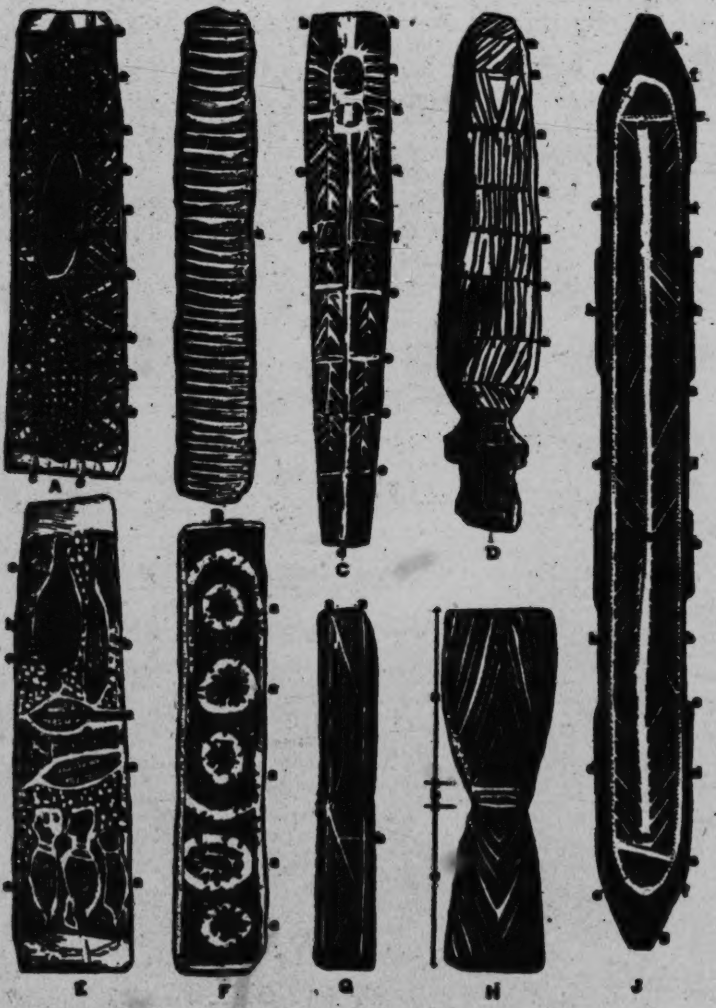

Fig. 6. *The Message Sticks*

A, E, Imilu; B, Ceremonial; C, Wurrupi; D, Secular; F, Kudjamumpi; G, H, Invitation to Secular Ceremony; J, Murrampi.

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centre of the message stick is the freshwater creek, Primbiamili, across which there is a crude bridge of logs (parallel lines *e*, *f*, on either side of the cross-hatched rectangle).

The long rectangle at the top of the message stick is the track between Snake Bay and Primbiamili Creek, and that at the bottom, from Primbiamili Creek to Cockle Point on Apsley Straits. Symbols *b*, *b*, are living stringy-bark trees by the roadside, and *c* is a group of dead trees.

The crossed squares *h*, *h*, indicate trees that had been cut down to clear a motor road between Snake Bay and Cockle Point. Apsley Strait, indicated by rectangle *g*, was crossed by the messenger in the dug-out canoe, *j*. The triangles at *n*, refer to the houses of the Bathurst Island Mission Station.

Pukamuni Ceremonial Purunkita

The return *purunkita* to that notifying the death of *Waniamperi* is shown on Fig. 5F, G, H. A messenger carried this *purunkita* to the Melville Island aborigines, together with the instructions about the conduct of the *pukamuni* from *Jibunglialumi*, the leader of the Bathurst Island group.

On side F, the crossed square, *a*, refers to *Urumatjina*, *c*, to *Marawani*, and *e*, to *Katopi*, the three chief mourners at the *pukamuni* of *Waniamperi*. *Katopi* is the son of the dead man.

Square *b* refers to instructions asking the "workers" to build a screen of boughs round the grave so that unauthorized people cannot see it; *d* refers to the cleaning of the grave site, and *f* to a request for the "workers" to dig out the roots and sticks in the ceremonial ground, so that the dancers will not injure their feet.

On side G, the crossed square *d*, is the *milimika* of the Bathurst Island group, and *b*, that of the Melville Island people. Groups of lines, *c*, *c*, refer to the number of "working men" to be appointed, while cross-hatched areas, *a*, *a*, indicate a request to the "workers" to do their tasks well and happily.

On side *H*, the lines, *a*, refer to burial poles to be erected around *Waniamperi's* grave; *b*, to the chief *pukamuni* men at Melville Island, and *c*, to the Bathurst *pukamuni* men whom *Jibunglialumi* will bring with him.

Pukamuni Ceremonial Purunkita

Fig. 6A is a *purunkita* sent by an old man, *Tjamalampua*, to another old man, *Tipumbriaria*, in Bathurst Island, asking him to bring many aborigines to the forthcoming *pukamuni* ceremony at Melville Island. The cross-lines, *a*, indicate the required number of men.

Kudjatumpi

This *purunkita* (Fig. 6B) was sent to the March-fly totemic centre at Kudjatumpi, southern Melville Island. The designs on the message stick were painted, instead of being engraved, because of the difficulty of cutting the circular patterns.

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The white circles and ovals, *a*, *a*, are backwaters and lagoons at the mouth of the freshwater stream at Kudjatumpi and the star-shaped designs, lilies growing on the surface of the water.

Wuriupi

Fig. 6C is an engraved message stick sent to members of the fire totemic group at Wuriupi, eastern Melville Island.

The disc, *a*, indicates the sun-woman, *Wuriupranala*, travelling across the sky, the radiating lines, *b*, the beams of light at sunrise, *f* and *g*, the mid-day camps of the sun-woman (p. 172). The long line, *d*, is the path of the sun-woman across the firmament.

Pandanus trees in the Milky Way are indicated at *c*, *c*, and similar designs and breaks in the galaxy by the transverse lines, *e*, *e*.

Numanira

The *purunkita* (Fig. 5A) belonged to the totemic red-ochre group at Numanira, west of Karslake Island.

The left-hand band of short transverse bars at *a*, represents the lines of coloured ochres in the sands of the sea-shore; the dots on the next band, *b*, to the right, are the oysters on the rocks at Numanira; band *c* indicates the reefs of red and yellow ochres covered at high tide; *d* is the motor road along the cliff on the mainland opposite Karslake Island, and *e*, the trees on the shore of Karslake Island, opposite Numanira.

Puntubu

Fig. 5B illustrates a *purunkita* which was sent to Puntubu, on the upper reaches of the Tjipripu River, central Melville Island, one of the totem places of the eucalyptus-tree woman, *Aragoutourina*.

The central line, *c*, is the Tjipripu River, which flows into Curtis Haven. On the banks of that river grow many *tulini* palms (symbols *b*, *b*, *b*,) from which the aborigines make their palm-leaf baskets. The roots of the palms, *a*, *a*, are indicated at either end of the message stick, and reefs of black and yellow rocks on the banks of the Tjipripu River at *d*, *d*, and *e*, *e*, *e*,

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respectively. The junctions of those rocks are indicated by the transverse lines, *f, f, f.*

Muranapi

A message stick to invite the aborigines of Muranapi, southern Melville Island, to a *pukamani*, is illustrated on Fig. 6J.

The central white line is Muranapi Creek; the groups of sloping lines on either side are the eucalyptus trees on its banks, and the transverse panels, such as *c, c,* pandanus trees on the subsidiary watercourses.

The semi-circles, *e, e,* on either end of the *purunkita*, represent the hills, *g, g,* the high ground, *f, f,* the sandy soil on the shores of Muranapi Creek, and the indentations, *d, d,* etc., on either edge of the *purunkita*, the *tulini* palms which grow on the edge of the fresh water.

Muranapi

Fig. 5C is another message stick sent to Muranapi, this time to the *Mandubuka* (blow-fly) totemic group.

The central lines, *a, a,* at both ends of the *purunkita* represent the salt-water creek, Duniau. On this creek is the totemic place, *d,* a rock about thirty feet long and six feet above the level of high tide. The transverse lines, *b, b,* etc., are freshwater creeks which flow into Duniau.

The sloping cuts within rectangle *d,* symbolize cracks in the totemic rock of *Mandubuka*. The remainder of the sloping cuts, as at *c, c,* etc., represent bloodwood trees and other eucalypts growing on the banks of the freshwater streams. Marks *f, f,* etc., on either end of the *purunkita*, indicate a point of land at the mouth of Duniau Creek.

Pirilou

Fig. 5D illustrates a message stick sent to the catfish totemic group of Pirilou on the Goose Creek swamps, central Melville Island.

The middle line is the Goose Creek, *a* (lower) being the salt-water section, and *b* (upper), the fresh-water. The transverse lines, *c, c,* etc., are subsidiary mangrove creeks, and *d, d,* etc., the freshwater lagoons or backwaters of the Goose Creek swamps. At *e, e,* etc., are mangrove trees on the shore of the salt-water stream, *a*; and *f, f,* etc., living paper-bark, and *g, g,* dead paper-bark trees in the freshwater lagoons.

Imilu and Buchanan Island

A *purunkita* (Fig. 6A, E), partly engraved, partly painted, was taken from Snake Bay first to the aborigines at Imilu, north-western Melville Island, 202 then to a group on Buchanan Island, notifying them of the forthcoming burial rituals.

211 x532 The three large ovals on Fig. 5A are graves on Melville Island, the short transverse lines, *b*, *b*, the *pukamuni* poles, and the short lines, *c*, *c*, at the bottom of the *purunkita*, the tracks leading to the grave. The cross-hatched panels, *a*, *a*, represent the grass around the grave site.

On the opposite side, Fig. 5B, the designs, *a*, *a*, are *pukamuni* poles, and *b*, *b*, old graves surrounded by poles (short lines, *c*, *c*). The dots represent the mourners at the grave.

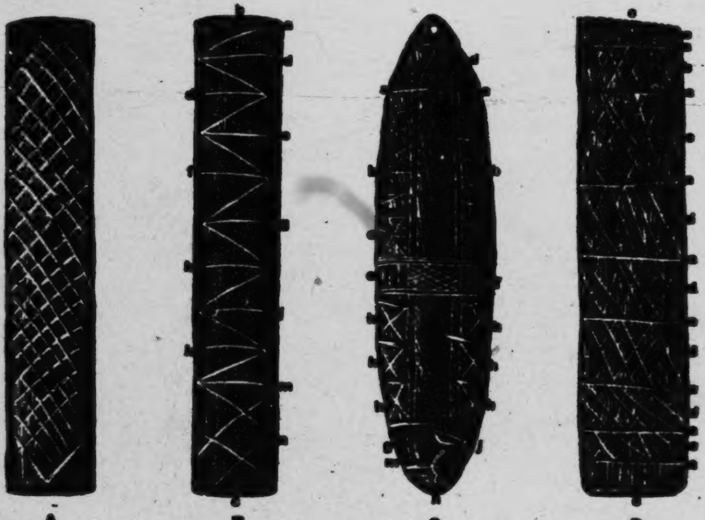

FIG. 7. *The Message Sticks*

A, B, Buchanan Island; C, Notification of Death; D, Buchanan Island.

Buchanan Island

Fig. 7A, B, are two sides of another *purunkita*, which was sent to the *Mudungkala* (eucalyptus tree) totemic group on Buchanan Island (adjacent to the Bathurst Island Mission Station). This *purunkita* asked for a supply of European goods and food so that the "workers" could be paid at the closing rituals of *Waniamperi's pukamuni* on Melville Island.

The diamond patterns on Fig. 7A refer to the numbers of men in large the

202 211 ×532 *Mudungkala* totemic group. On the reverse side (Fig. 7B), the zig-zag line *a*, is the road between Snake Bay (upper end, *b*), and Cockle Point, in Apsley Straits (lower end, *c*). At *d*, *d*, is a request for two six-pound bags of sugar; *e*, for tea; *f*, sufficient printed calico for a loin cloth; *g*, three sticks of tobacco; *h*, a tin of tobacco; *j*, a pair of trousers; *k*, a pocket knife, and *m*, a pipe. The crossed lines at *n* indicate the camp of *Tjamalumpua*, the sender of the message stick.

Buchanan Island

The message stick (Fig. 7D) refers to the Jaulama jungle, about a half a mile south of our camp.

This stick was sent by the chief mourner of the Melville Island *pukamuni* group to the members of the ironwood, *Mudungkala*, totemic group of Buchanan Island, and adjacent Bathurst Islanders, notifying them of the oncoming burial rituals. The designs on the stick, however, have no relationship to either the ironwood tree group or the message they would receive. The short vertical lines at *c*, *c*, are living paper-bark trees, and the transverse lines, *a*, *a*, dead paper-bark trees in the Jaulama jungle. At *b*, are the roots of the trees, and at panels *c*, the vines of the edible *roko* yams on the branches of the paper-barks. The four panels, *d*, *d*, etc., are jungle trees, and *e* indicates their roots.

Invitation to Adjoining Tribe

[574] Fig. 6G, H, illustrates a message stick (not associated with a *pukamuni* ceremony) from the Melville Island people, inviting the aborigines on the Coburg Peninsula to pay them a visit and to perform some of their mainland ceremonies.[67]

On the obverse side, Fig. 6G, the parallel lines, *a*, *a*, symbolize the shores of the Coburg Peninsula, and the zig-zag line, *b*, a mangrove creek in the same locality.

On the reverse side, 6H, the V-shaped patterns, *a*, indicate the men who have been invited from the Coburg Peninsula, and those in the lower section, *b*, the women. The short transverse lines at *c*, represent the Melville Island men who will act as hosts to the visitors.

Secular

202 211 439 Fig. 5E is a secular message stick sent to an aboriginal, *Marawani*, who was on a visit to Darwin, asking him to bring back the following goods; *a*,

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[67] This message stick suggests that, at the present time, members of the mainland tribes and those of the Tiwi, occasionally visit each other.

tobacco, *b*, matches, *c*, a pipe, *d*, a calico loin cloth, *e*, a pair of short trousers, 202 211
f, a shirt, *g*, sugar, *h*, tea, and *j*, flour. 439

Secular

Fig. 60 is a carved stick whose designs were thought out by the artist as 532x
he walked along the sandy beach near our camp. Although not a message stick, the illustration is included in the section as an example of how an aboriginal expresses his mental images through the medium of simple wood carving.

The horizontal lines, *a*, *a*, symbolize the waves breaking on the beach, and the groups of short lines, a pattern of shallow gutters which had been formed on the sandy shore by the fresh water seeping from a nearby lagoon.

10. THE BURIAL POLES

The painted and decorated poles of Melville and Bathurst Islands attracted 765
the attention of all the early visitors. Sir Gordon Bremer in 1824, possibly the 211
first European to see the *pukamuni* poles, when writing about a grave he saw on Melville Island, states: "The situation was one of such perfect retirement and repose that it displayed considerable feeling in the survivors who placed it there and the simple order which pervaded the spot would not have disgraced a civilised people. It was an oblong square open at the foot, the remaining end and sides being railed around with trees, 7 feet to 8 feet high, some
of which were carved with stone or shell and further ornamented by rings of [322]
wood. On the tops of these were placed the waddies (throwing sticks) of the [413]
deceased. The grave was raised above the level of the earth, but the raised part was not more than 3 feet long. At the head was placed a piece of a canoe (probably a bark basket) and a spear and round the grave were several little baskets made of the fan-palm leaf, which, from their small size, we thought had been placed there by the children of the departed. Nothing could exceed the neatness of the whole; the sand and earth were cleared away from the sides and not a shrub or weed was suffered to grow within the area."[96] 211

I have quoted Sir Gordon Bremer's description in full because it shows 178
that, even after a hundred and thirty years, the aborigines of Melville Island, 765

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[96] Bremer, 1843. From this description it would appear that Bremer chanced to see a grave not long after the aborigines had completed the final rituals. Had any time elapsed the whole area would have been covered with grass and leaves, for, after the *pukamuni* ceremonies, nobody is interested in either the grave or the poles.

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[178] where they have not suffered from ecclesiastic prohibitions, are still using a similar form of grave and posts.

Major Campbell (1834, p. 158), writing of a grave he saw on Melville Island in 1826, states: "It (the grave) is surrounded by upright poles, many of which are formed at the top like lances and halberts, 14–15 feet high, and between these the spears and waddies (probably of the deceased) are stuck upright in the ground."

Brown (1905, p. 28) found a grave on Luxmore Head, in Apsley Straits surrounded . . . "by wooden slabs, portions of which had been burnt. Aboriginal markings were faintly discernible in places on the wood, some of the posts had the wood cut away from the outside toward the centre, leaving a short spike standing up in the middle of the post."

Klaatsch (1907, p. 257), in referring to the same burial poles at Luxmore Head, writes: "In some examples the slab was so carved that the upper part was only connected with the lower by two thin pillars or, on others, the top was mushroom-shaped.

"It is easy to see that the aborigines used fire for this work of sculpture, scratching the burnt part away with shell."

Basedow,[99] in 1911, came across a grave of an infant, on Bathurst Island, surrounded by five simply decorated posts, which had "been cut and carved with a sharp bladed instrument, in all probability a tomahawk."

Basedow persuaded the aborigines to renovate the designs, which did not vary greatly from those in use at the present day.

[114] Spencer,[100] in 1911, made sketches of many of the burial poles, and arranged for the aborigines to redecorate a group which was later displayed in the National Museum, Melbourne. He states (1928, p. 682) that: "It (the pole) [177] was slowly and laboriously cut with an iron tomahawk, but formerly with a sharp shell, until it has the form decided upon by the artificer."

Dr. Kenneth Fry, who visited Melville Island in 1913, was the first investigator to ascertain the meanings of a number of poles. These, with his permission, are illustrated on Fig. 8. All of these shapes, but two, are those still most commonly used among the hundred or more which I saw on Melville Island.

[115] An old aboriginal, *Tjamalampua*, told me that in *palaneri* times, i.e., a long while ago, before there were any steel axes, the aborigines used stone axes to fell the hollow trees for *pukamuni* poles. Although there were just as many poles around the grave as there are today, they were neither as

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[99] Basedow (1913), p. 314, Fig. 4, Pls. 13, 14, 16, 17, 18.

[100] Spencer (1928), p. 682, Figs. 475–7, Pl. X.

elaborately shaped nor decorated, often being covered with no more than a 211
series of dots.[1] 765

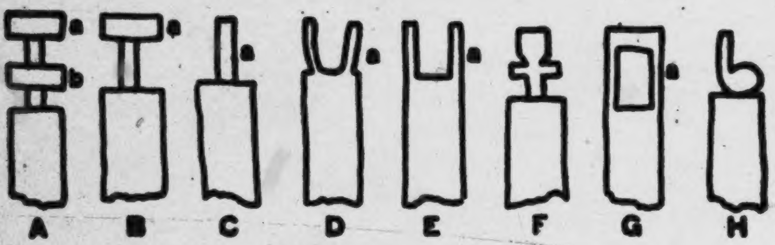

FIG. 8. *The Burial Poles*

Origin of the Pukamuni Poles

At present we have no evidence to show whether the custom of erecting 171
burial poles around the grave in such numbers, not as a memorial, but as a 765
gift to the dead, is confined entirely to the Tiwi tribe, or whether it is used 211
in any other part of the world, and has reached the Tiwi by diffusion. There [769]
certainly are no similar burial poles on the Australian continent.

In north-eastern Arnhem Land, some of the decorated log coffins are as high as seven feet.[2] But the function of those coffins bears no relationship to that of the burial poles of Melville Island, the former being no more than coffins to hold the bones, and the latter, gifts to please the spirit of the dead.

It is possible that, during the long period of isolation from the mainland cultures, the Melville Islanders may have changed coffins of north-eastern Arnhem Land into the burial poles of the Tiwi.

The only examples of burial posts outside of Australia known to me, that are in any way comparable in function to those on Melville Island, are the *malanggan* burial ornaments of New Ireland described by Kramer.[3]

Methods of Manufacture

Although, at the conclusion of the *pukamuni* rituals, the grave is totally 765
neglected and the poles allowed to decay, the "workers", using steel axes[4]

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[1] Although *Tjamalampua* is not fully correct (see Bremer's and Campbell's statement in the early nineteenth century, pp. 107, 108), it indicates that both the poles and their painted decorations have, with the passing of the years, and the acquisition of steel tools, become more complex.

[2] Mountford, 1956, p. 317.

[3] Kramer, 1925.

[4] The evidence of Bremer, Spencer and the aborigines, suggests that before the advent 412
of metal the only cutting tools owned by the aborigines would have been crude stone 74
axes, and the shells of cockles. It is likely that, under these conditions, the poles would
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765 and the hardest and most durable timber available, spared no pains to make the best poles they could.[8]

×532 765 When the "workers" had finished shaping the poles they notified the leader of the *pukamuni* ceremony, who then gave the order for the poles to be scorched over a fire of blazing leaves to make a black ground on which to paint the design (Mountford, 1956, p. 427). Then, setting up the poles in a double row near the grave (Mountford, 1956, p. 426), the men began their task of decoration (Pl. 33B, D). At the same time, the ceremonial leader sent message sticks (p. 98) to notify the outlying groups that the final rituals were about to start.

386 The materials used for decoration were: red and yellow ochres from Imilu, Cape Van Diemen, a white ochre from a beach nearby, crushed charcoal for black, one of three types of fixatives, i.e., the white of turtle eggs, wild honey and beeswax mixed together, and the particularly gelatinous sap of one of the tree orchids.

The ochres were crushed, mixed with water and one or more of the fixatives, and applied to the poles with brushes made from chewed strips of bark or vines (Fig. 2).

517 ×532 As I watched these primitive artists at work, I was impressed with the care they took in the arranging of their simple patterns, and with the obvious pleasure they experienced in their work. A quiet air of contentment pervaded the outdoor studio as each of the ten artists made his own pole as beautiful as possible.

Each artist appeared to be certain as to the designs he would use; there was no evidence of copying; in fact, *Pulanimbuwi* showed me the rough draft of the designs of his pole (Pl. 35A, B, Fig. 9), scratched on the back of a cigarette tin, days before he had even felled the tree.

×532 765 A puzzling aspect of the *pukamuni* poles is the wide variety of the painted designs used, and the almost total absence in those designs of any reference to the myths and totemic localities.[9]

At first sight it would appear that the pole shapes, collected by both Fry and myself, were inventions of the moment. An analysis of the poles

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174 412 322 have simpler shapes than at the present time, although Campbell (1834, p. 158) speaks about "poles with tops like lances and halberts". The aborigines may have used fire to assist in the shaping of the poles, in fact, this is suggested by Klaatsch (1907, p. 587).

[8] Not far from our camp was the deserted grave of the father of *Muranajua* (Pl. 38D), who died when his son was an infant. *Muranajua* was then over forty years old, yet the poles, although somewhat eroded and disarranged by the elements, are still in a fair state of preservation.

[177] [9] This and old *Tjuwalampua's* statement, p. 109, could indicate that the poles and their designs are a recent cultural trait that is not yet fully absorbed into the culture.

recorded on the expedition, however, indicates that this may not be so, i.e., 532x 765

Forks or limbs of trees	26 per cent
Breasts of women	9 per cent
Rocks on sea-coast	18 per cent
Windows and doors (openings in poles)	15 per cent

That is, four shapes make up 68 per cent and the remaining eleven shapes, 38 per cent.

This would suggest that certain shapes have a traditional meaning, and that these shapes predominate. In fact, an examination of the accounts of the early travellers, Bremer, Campbell, Klaatsch, and Spencer, suggests that, except for those poles in the form of human figures, the *pukamuni* poles have not changed in shape to any extent during the last fifty years or more. [114] [178]

Description of the Burial Poles

(a) *The Pukamuni of Waniamperi*

The ten *tutinis* which the "workers" cut and painted for *Waniamperi's pukamuni* were looked upon as a family, a man, his two wives, and their children.

Pl. 32J, a middle-aged man, had two wives; Pl. 34E, a very fat, but young woman, and Pl. 35A, B, her much older sister.

The young wife, Pl. 34E, had three children; Pl. 36A, B, a small boy about ten, Pl. 36D, a girl of twelve, and Pl. 37D, a young married woman without a family.

The older wife, Pl. 35A, B, had four children; Pl. 36F, a boy of five, Pl. 36C, a girl about twelve, Pl. 32H, a young unmarried man, and Pl. 37D, an unmarried woman.

Plate 32J, eighteen feet in height, was by far the tallest pole in the group.

Because the actual shapes of the poles seldom had any relationship to the designs painted on them, the pole shapes and the painted designs will be described separately.

The pole shapes of Pl. 32J are: the projection, *c*, on the top, represents the branch of a tree, the bosses, *a*, *a*, *a*, are the breasts of women, the three cylindrical sections, *m*, *m*, *m*, large rocks on the sea-coast, and the narrow uprights, *n*, *n*, joining them, the limbs of eucalyptus trees.

In the painted designs, *a*, *a*, *a*, are, as before, the breasts of women, and the short vertical lines, *b*, *b*, etc., the teeth of a comb. The painted white projection, *c*, on the top of the pole, is a shovel-nosed shark; the crossed circles, *d*, *d*, are the noses of crocodiles, and the diagonal bands, *e*, *e*, *e*, the x532 765 mangrove creeks in which the crocodiles live. The red, yellow and white bands, *h*, *h*, etc., are boulders of various colours on the beach, and the dotted diamond shapes, on *m*, *m*, *m*, the pattern which the turtle-woman, *Garagalani*, painted on her bark basket at *Purukupali's* ceremony, and which, when she changed herself into a turtle, became the shell design on her carapace (p. 39).

The pole shapes of Pl. 34B are: the projections, *f*, the fork of a tree, the bosses, *a*, *a*, breasts of women and the three cylindrical sections, rocks on the sea-coast.

The painted designs at *a*, *a*, are, as before, women's breasts, and the radiating designs and central dot on the bosses, the eyes of women. The vertical bands, such as *d*, etc., on the two upper cylindrical sections, and the horizontal bands, *e*, etc., on the lower section, are women's trade belts, the discs on the upper and lower sections, silver coins, and the dots on the background, stars in the sky.

The pole shapes of Pl. 35A, B, are: the two forked projections, *a*, *a*, the throwing sticks used by the moon-man, *Tjapara*, in his fight against *Purukupali*; the rectangular opening immediately below, is a window, and the lower section, a large boulder.

The painted decorations on the pole (Pl. 35A, B), are, by far, the most elaborate and best executed I have examined. On the upper section, the diagonal and transverse red and white lines, *b*, symbolise the native roads near Imilu, north-western Melville Island, the source of the red ochre so valued by the Melville Islanders; the cone-shaped figures, *d*, outcrops of red and white rocks, and the bands, *c*, *c*, grass on the top of the cliffs at Imilu.

The many designs on the lower section illustrate, in detail, the topography at Imilu. On Fig. 9, the key to Pl. 35A, B, these designs are arranged in topographical levels.[7]

Level 1, pictures the highlands; 2, the jungle at the top of the cliffs; 3, an aboriginal road; 4, the trees on the sea-coast; 5, the surface of the sea; 6, the creatures in the sea, and 7, the waves breaking on the sea-shore.

On level 1, *g*, *g*, *g*, represent the eucalypts of the highlands and on level 2, *j*, *j*, etc., the jungle trees which grow along the edge of the cliff. At *y*, is a

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[133]

[7] Brown (1905, p. 28), writing about the appearance of these cliffs, when viewed from the sea, states, "... they often appear thus: four parallel lines—top of timber, top of cliff, top of beach, edge of water; the first, green, the second, red, the third, white, greyish-blue water in front and blue sky above." Brown and *Pulanimbuwi*, the artist of the pole, were both impressed with the same parallel lines of colour, which extend for miles along the shore of Cape Van Diemen.

winding track leading from the beach, up the cliffs, to Imilu. Another road, at level 3, along the top of the cliff, is indicated by the horizontal barred design, *k*, *k*.

Level 4 pictures the sea beach, *h*, *h*, etc., being casuarina trees, and, *s*, an especially large eucalypt.

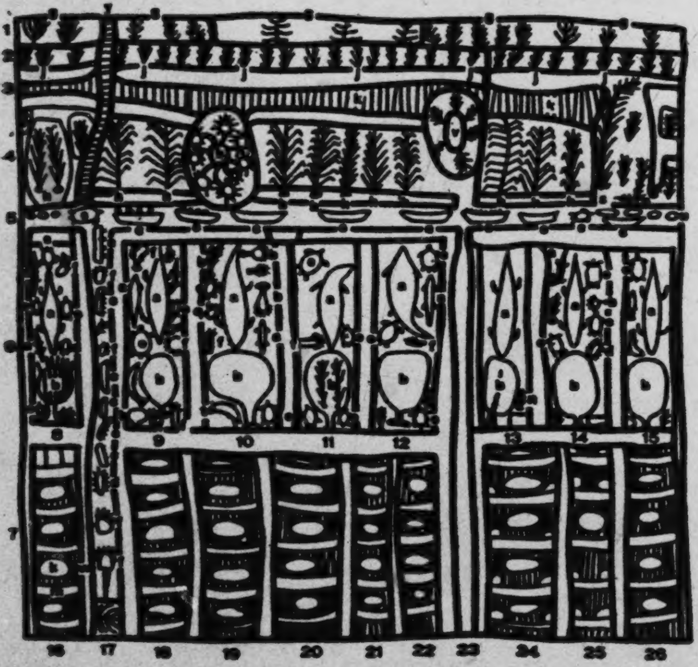

FIG. 9. *Carved and Painted Burial Pole*

There is a billabong at *b*, with trees (radiating designs) on its banks, and the pit, *v*, at Imilu, surrounded by trees, from which the aborigines dig their ochres.[8]

On the surface of the water (level 5), *c*, *c*, are canoes, and *e*, *e*, turtles.

A series of panels, 8–15, on level 6, picture the creatures that live in the deep water. The designs *b*, *b*, etc., indicate large sponges on the rocks; *a*, *a*,

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[8] This ochre, yellow when dug out of the ground, changes to red when heated in the camp fire.

532 765 etc., old and young crocodiles; *e*, *e*, etc., turtles; *f*, *f*, etc., octopi, and *d*, *d*, etc., crabs. Panel 17 is a creek in the mangrove swamps, in which the aborigines anchor their canoes, *c*, *c*, etc. In this creek are octopi, *f*, *f*, etc.

Panels 16–26 illustrate the sea-shore and the waves. The series of vertical parallel lines in each panel are the incoming lines of waves; the ovals, such as *k*, are the shells on the sandy bottom, and the curving panels, similar to *m*, the waves breaking on the beach.

The pole shapes of Pl. 37F, which the aborigines looked upon as a young woman, are: *a*, her hat; *b*, her neck, and *e*, her ribs. Sections *c*, *c*, *c*, are large rocks on the sea-shore.

The meaning of the designs painted on the same pole are: the chevrons on the top of the pole at *a* are spider webs in the jungle; the bands, *b*, rocks of different colours on the beach; diamonds on *c*, *c*, *c*, *c*, the check designs on [291] the printed calico of the young woman's skirt; *d*, *d*, *d*, her belts of different colours, and *e*, is the coloured cloth she used as a head band.

In general, the pole shapes of Pl. 32H, represent a tree. The projections, *g*, are the branches; the two upper cylindrical sections, *m*, *m*, the boles; the opening, *h*, is a hollow and the lower sections, the trunk.

The painted designs in the rectangles covering the pole each have similar meanings. The intersecting diagonal lines (see inset), *c*, *c*, *c*, *c*, symbolize the pattern on the back, and the groups of vertical parallel lines, *a*, *a*, those on the side of a reef fish, called *pranaia*. The long white lines, *e*, *e*, are stripes, and *d*, *d*, *d*, *d*, dots on the bodies of the *Maludaianini* caterpillars which later were transformed into the men of the Milky Way. The dotted triangles, *b*, *b*, represent the shell pattern on the back of the hawkbill turtle, *Garagalani*.

In the pole shapes of Pl. 36C, the upper projection, *a*, is a cycad palm; *c*, *c*, are the breasts of women, and *e*, *e*, *e*, edible yams.

The painted rectangles on sections *d* and *f* refer, almost exclusively, to different kinds of food, although some common objects, such as throwing sticks, baskets and spears are represented. I did not find out the meanings of the designs on the lowest section.

The pole shapes, illustrated on Pl. 36A, B, are: *a*, the bow of a wooden canoe, and the oval designs at *c*, the paint on its sides.

On section *b*, of Pl. 36A, the painted diamond pattern *g*, is the body of a goanna, the triangle, *h*, its tail, and the dots are its eggs.

The intersecting lines on the other side of the same section (Pl. 36B), symbolize the ribs of a goanna, and the cross-hatched diamonds, the marks on its skin.

The designs on sections *d* and *f* also relate to the goanna. The small white 532x discs on *d* are goanna holes; the cross-hatched diamonds, its skin patterns, 765 and the dots, its eggs. The triangles on *f* are the ribs, and the dots, the fat of the same creature. White and red bands on *e*, symbolise waves breaking on the beach.

The shapes of Pl. 36D are: *a* is white cloud; the rectangular opening *e*, a door, and the thinner section *f*, a post of a house. Section *d* is a large boulder, and *g*, *h*, the trunks of a fan palm.

The painted, cross-hatched bands, *b*, on section *e*, indicate goanna fat; the alternate bands, *c*, *c*, etc., are rocks on the shore, and the central white disc on *d* is the light from an electric torch. The vertical lines radiating from this disc are aboriginal paths; the horizontal bands are adjacent mangrove creeks, and the cross-hatched rectangles, discarded fish-bones on its banks.

The circles at *g* are rocks in the sea, and the white lines represent rope used for catching turtles. The dots on the background symbolize turtle eggs in the sand. The vertical bands on *h* are mangrove creeks, and the cross-hatched areas, body scars on the backs and arms of old men and women.[8]

The two projections at *a* on Pl. 36F, are the front flippers of a turtle, the opening, *c*, is a window, and *d*, a door. The lower section is a European house.

The cross-hatching at *e*, *e*, represents the marks on the handles of throwing sticks (Pl. 32D); the transverse bands, *f*, and the vertical bands, *g*, *g*, aboriginal tracks in the forest, and the dots, stars in the sky.

The upper projections at *a* (Pl. 37D), are the branches of trees, the rectangular opening below is a doorway, the two cylindrical sections, *h*, *h*, are rocks on the coast, and the design, *j*, is a stingray.

The painted designs refer almost exclusively to the decorations used at a *pukamuni* ceremony. The chevron bands at *b* and *c* on the upper projections, *a*, are coloured cane, and plain, feathered *pukamuni* arm ornaments respectively [301] (Pl. 31E, F). Painted designs at *f*, *f*, are arm ornaments similar to those at *b*, *c*. The plain band, *g*, however, represents chest ornaments (Pl. 31D, G). The circles at *d*, *d*, are *pukamuni* cane armlets, and the cross-hatched rectangles and panels *h*, *h*, *h*, the chevron body scars of the performers.

(*b*) *The Pukamuni of Makapini*

As in the *pukamuni* ceremony of *Waniamperi*, the poles of *Makapini* were looked upon as a family; Pl. 34B, the mother; Pl. 34A, an adolescent daughter,

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[8] Until recently, both men and women were decorated with elaborate series of chevron scars on the arms, legs and back (Pl. 29A). This practice has been discontinued. [304]

*532 765 and Pl. 34F, a small son. As before, the shape of the pole had one set of meanings, and the designs painted on them another.

The two projections, *a*, on Pl. 34B, represent the fork, and the central white section, *d*, is the bole of a eucalyptus tree. The sections above and below *d*, are large rocks on the beach.

The central transverse painted bands, *b*, *b*, are women's leather trade belts, the vertical panels, *c*, etc., in the upper section, crocodile's intestines, and the cross-hatched panels, *g*, etc., crocodile's backbone. On the lower section, *f*, etc., are turtle intestines, and the cross-hatched panels, *e*, etc., chevron body scars.

The significance of the shapes of Pl. 34A, reading from the top are: the white top, *k*, a European hat; *s*, its rim; the openings, *c*, *c*, windows, and *p*, *r*, tree trunks.

The white vertical panels, *a*, indicate a turtle's vertebrae, and the adjacent cross-hatched panels, *b*, its intestines. White bands, *e*, *e*, are *pukamuni* cane arm ornaments (*jairinis*, Pl. 31H), and cross-hatched bands, *d*, *d*, chevron body scars.

[291] Transverse band *f*, is a leather belt; panels, *h*, are turtle's intestines; cross-hatched areas, *g*, etc., body scars. On *r*, the lowest section, band *m*, is a leather trade belt; the vertical panels, *o*, are turtle intestines, and the cross-hatched panels, *n*, body scars.

The four projections, *a* (Pl. 34F), are branches of trees; *g*, is a hill; *h*, an edible yam, and *j*, a large rock on the coast.

The long white rectangles, *b*, etc., are small freshwater creeks, and the diagonal marks on *c*, body scars; yellow band *d*, is a male *Maratji* (p. 154). The chevron panels, *e*, etc., are female *Maratjis*, and the white rectangles, *f*, etc., thunderclouds associated with this dangerous mythical creature.

The meanings of the painted designs on 37C are: sections *a*, *a*, arm ornaments, *palmatjinas* (Pl. 31E, F), and *b*, the false beard, *baludi*, made of goose feathers (Pl. 31C), both of which are worn at the *pukamuni* ceremonies. Designs *c* and *d*, symbolize a stingray, *paluwadju*, and *e*, its body markings.

(*c*) *Miscellaneous*

Pl. 34C, D, pictures the crocodile-man, *Jirakupai*, who once lived in a lagoon near Cape Fourcroy (myth, p. 27).

The forearms of the crocodile are at *a*, the V-shaped design, *b*, representing its lower jaw. The head is at *c*, the chest at *d*, the neck at *e*, the nose (crossed lines) at *f*, the spinal crest at *g*, and the scale pattern on its back at *h*, *h*.

On Pl. 37E the upper projections *a*, *a*, symbolize the limbs of a tree. The diagonal lines, *b*, indicate the sandbanks in the bay at the front of our camp, 532× and the dots, *c*, on the triangles, the oysters on the rocks. 765

The opening, *c*, is a window; *d*, *d*, are the legs of an aboriginal man, and the bosses, *f*, *f*, etc., breasts of women. Diagonal coloured lines, such as *g*, etc., are the vines of an edible yam, and the dotted diamond shapes, *h*, etc., the spider webs on their leaves.

The shapes and painted designs on Pl. 37B all refer to the topography near the expedition camp.

The projection, *a*, represents the trunk of a eucalyptus tree, the bosses, *b*, *e*, *e*, and *c*, *c*, symbolize boulders on the sea-beach; the horizontal lines, *c*, *c*, etc., the sandbars in the bay; the long vertical panels, *g*, *g*, etc., the open beach; the bands of short vertical lines at *d*, *d*, *d*, the lines of waves breaking on that beach, and the cross-hatched rectangles, such as *f*, *f*, etc., the seaweed floating on the surface of the water.

The painted projections, *a*, *a*, on Pl. 37A again represent the fork of a tree, and the opening, *h*, is a window. The bosses, *b*, *b*, are the breasts of women, the painted circle *c*, with the intersecting lines, symbolizing the nipple.

The central line, *d*, is a freshwater creek which ran into the sea about 200 yards from our camp, while the parallel chevrons, *e*, etc., indicate the lines made by the water of a nearby lagoon as it seeps through the sand and runs down the beach into the sea (see carved stick, Fig. 6D).

The boss, *f*, is an adjacent rocky point, the grooved arms, *g*, *g*, refer to Karslake Island, and the painted design, *m*, to the sandy beach on that island. Diagonal lines, *j*, are the roots of a jungle tree, *pintoma*, and the crossed circles, *k*, its fruit.

The symbolism on the pole, Pl. 36E, deals with the sea and the swamps at a mangrove creek, Tungaduna, which was about two miles north-west of our camp.

The dark-coloured designs, *a*, indicate the open sea, and the white spaces, *d*, the salt water in the mangrove creek. The symbols, *b*, *b*, etc., show the tide marks on the banks of the mangrove creek; *c*, *c*, the sand, and *e*, the mud on its bottom. The dots on semi-circle *f*, are coloured mud crabs; the lines *g*, sandbars in Snake Bay, and the triangles, at *h*, as well as *k*, and *j*, the tide lines on the sandy beach. At *c*, is a black stingray which lives among the rocks; *m* is another stingray (unidentified) which frequents the shallow water, and the cone-shaped design, *g*, is a flat-head fish.

The larger circles, *n*, etc., on the lower section are the cockles, the shells of which the aborigines use as cutting tools; the smaller circles, *o*, mussels, *wurulini*, and the dots, *p*, the soldier crabs on the beach.

×532 765 [114] Dr. Kenneth Fry, when visiting the islands during 1913, made sketches of the pole shapes of eight *tudinis* and found out the meanings of five of them. These are reproduced on Fig. 8.

Fig. 8A represents a man carrying a roll of blankets on his back, *a*, being his hat, and *b*, his blankets. Fig. 8B also represents a man, *a*, as before, indicating his hat. On Fig. 8C, *a*, is the mast of a boat; on Fig. 8D, *a*, is the crutch in the boom of a pearling lugger (usually called branches of trees in the 1954 series); and on Fig. 8G, *a* is a window.

Dr. Fry did not find out the meanings of Fig. 8E, F, and H.

The present-day meaning of design, Fig. 8F, which could have applied to [177 797] Dr. Fry's example, is somewhat interesting. The aborigines at the Bathurst Island mission are warned of the terrors of their future life if they are not buried "under the cross", i.e., in the mission cemetery.

When I asked the aborigines at Melville Island what was the significance of the cross they had carved on the top of several of their *pukamuni* poles, they explained that it was there purely as a "safety measure", just in case there was something in the mission story.

II. THE CARVED AND PAINTED FIGURES

[171] It has been known, for about twenty years, that aboriginal craftsmen, in widely separated places in Northern Australia, but particularly in north-eastern Arnhem Land, have made carved and painted figures in wood.[10] It was a surprise, however, to find that the Tiwi people, who appear to have been separated from the mainland cultures for a considerable time, were using similar figures in their burial rituals.

Inquiries revealed that, for some years, one or another of the aboriginal craftsmen, skilled in the carving of *pukamuni* poles with steel tools, and, no doubt, experimenting with new shapes, occasionally made a burial pole in the form of a conventionalized human body (Pl. 39), or smaller human figures (Pls. 40, 41), which were placed on the grave.

I gathered information about three old human-headed burial poles as well as adding to the expedition collection, two recently made poles and six smaller figures.

At the burial, about thirty years ago, of the mother of one of my informants, a "worker", called *Kado*, made and erected a human-headed burial pole. In 1941, Mr. W. E. Harney saw a well-carved head on a burial

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[10] Mountford, 1956, p. 415, traces the distribution of the carved wooden figures in Northern Australia and their development at Yirrkalla, from simple human-headed burial posts of Malay origin to carved heads and full-length figures of considerable merit.

pole at Punata on Apsley Straits (Fig. 1), while I saw and photographed the 532x
third example in the form of a highly conventionalized human figure 765
(Pl. 38A, a, c), which was on an old grave not far from our camp. No
doubt there are other examples of these poles on the deserted graves of the
Islands. I saw recently, in the Musée Ethnographique et Musée Suisse de
Folklore, Bâle, Switzerland, two full-length human figures which had been
collected at Bathurst Island by Mr. Karel Kupta in 1956.

This evidence indicates that, for thirty years, at least, the men and women of the Tiwi,[11] occasionally carved burial poles in human form; we do not know when the practice of carving the smaller figures[12] began.

At first sight it appeared that these wooden figures might have been a [177]
cultural trait borrowed, as in north-eastern Arnhem Land, from the Malay
trepangers. Further research, however, did not confirm this hypothesis.

Although now and again some Malay prau, driven off its course by con- 174
trary winds, must have touched the shores of either Melville or Bathurst
Island, it is certain that the men of the Tiwi, who were notably unfriendly, 648
would have endeavoured to drive them away. This unfriendliness probably
explains why the Malays were not able to establish themselves on these
Islands as they did in north-eastern Arnhem Land. The old men of the Tiwi
do not remember any Malay fishermen visiting their country. This evidence
that the Malays did not settle on the land of the Tiwi is further supported by
Campbell (1834), who writes (p. 143), "The Malays were never seen near [114]
Melville Island", and later (p. 155), ". . . Malay fishermen were forbidden
to go near Melville Island . . . alleging that it was infested with pirates. . . ."

This evidence suggests that the Tiwi practice of carving human figures 532x
in wood was not, like that of the aborigines of Arnhem Land, borrowed from 765
a Malayan source, but is a recent local development, probably stimulated by 177
the acquisition of steel tools and the other possessions of the white man. For
instance, it would be easy to imagine a skilled aboriginal trying to make his
pole resemble the tall bodies of the white man's saints in the mission church.
From these larger would develop the smaller figures.

It is unlikely that any elaborately carved burial pole, much less one in the
form of a human figure, would be more than fifty years old. Before that time,
except those stolen from the short-lived Fort Dundas settlement, the Tiwi 532x
would have owned few, if any steel tools. 765

Although the Tiwi have no specific myth about the larger burial poles, 773

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[11] A woman may cut a burial pole instead of her husband, should he be absent.

[12] There is a difference, however, between the two; the *tutini* poles, in human form, are cut from the hardest and most durable eucalypt; the smaller figures from the soft wood of the beach kapok, a wood which is quickly destroyed by insects.

773 they do have one which explains, to their satisfaction, the origin of the small
x732 figures.[13]

765 On the occasion of the first *pukamuni* at Taparariml, a man, *Piamatilidjara*, who later become the tawny frogmouth (*Podagus strigoides*), made and painted a small figure, similar to Pl. 40C, F. This he placed on the grave to impersonate *Purukupali*, whose body was not buried there, he having walked into the sea and drowned himself.

x532
765 At present these human figures, both large and small, are made, either at the request of the chief mourner, or by the "worker" himself. This happens if the man cutting the pole, holding the dead person in especial esteem, wishes to please his spirit. The smaller figures may represent either a son of the dead or mythical men and women of creation times.

When the burial poles are being erected, one of them, in human form, or a smaller figure, is occasionally placed at the head of the grave.[14] The *mopaditi*,
[775] on leaving its body, sees the wooden figure, and thinking it is either its son, or one of its old companions, stays at the grave and talks to it about old times. These wooden figures have no *imunka* (life essence), nevertheless the *mopaditi*, who is believed to be stupid and easily misled, thinks it is talking to a living person.

I collected two burial poles (Pl. 39) in the form of highly conventionalized
[126] human beings, and six smaller, full-length figures (Pl. 40, 41). I also photographed a pole, in human form, on an old grave (Pl. 38A, B, C).

Pl. 39A, B, C, is a *pukamuni* pole representing a performer, ready to take part in the final burial rituals. The projection *m* (39B), is his hair; *n*, *n*, are his ears, and *o*, *o*, his arms; *p* is a *tokwianga* (goose-feather ball), and *s*, (39A), his backbone.

The cross-hatched squares, *a*, *a*, *a* (39A), represent patches of grass on the floor of the jungle; the designs, *e*, *e*, *e*, jungle trees, and *b*, *b*, *b*, spider webs in the branches.

The waves of the sea are indicated by the bands of short vertical lines, *c*, *c*, *c*; a boulder on the sea-shore by oval *f* (39A); oysters on the rocks by the squares with diagonal lines, *d*, *d*, and paper-bark trees by the groups of intersecting lines at *e*, *e*.

The designs on the face and head (39C) are: *k*, edible fruit, *h*, grass in

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[174] [13] This myth does not necessarily indicate great age because those of non-literate people tend to keep up-to-date. Mountford, 1956, p. 98, and Worsley, 1955, p. 856, both give examples of how the Groote Eylandt aborigines have incorporated foreign elements in their creation stories.

[14] This is only one of many safeguards used by the Tiwi to keep the *mopaditi* away from the camp of its old companions, particularly during the first few days after death.

322
x532
765

[p.120A]

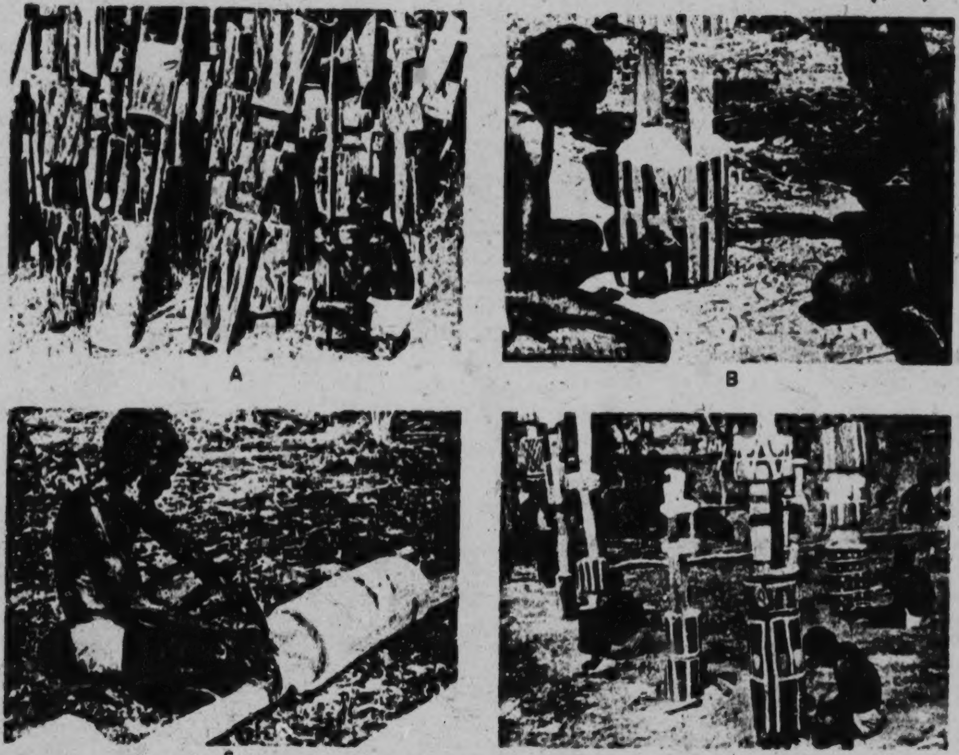

Plate 33. *Carved and Painted Burial Poles*
A, Poles at Old Grave; B, D, Painting Burial Poles; C, Cutting Burial Pole.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958

OI20 Tiwi OI20

x 532
765

[p.120 B]

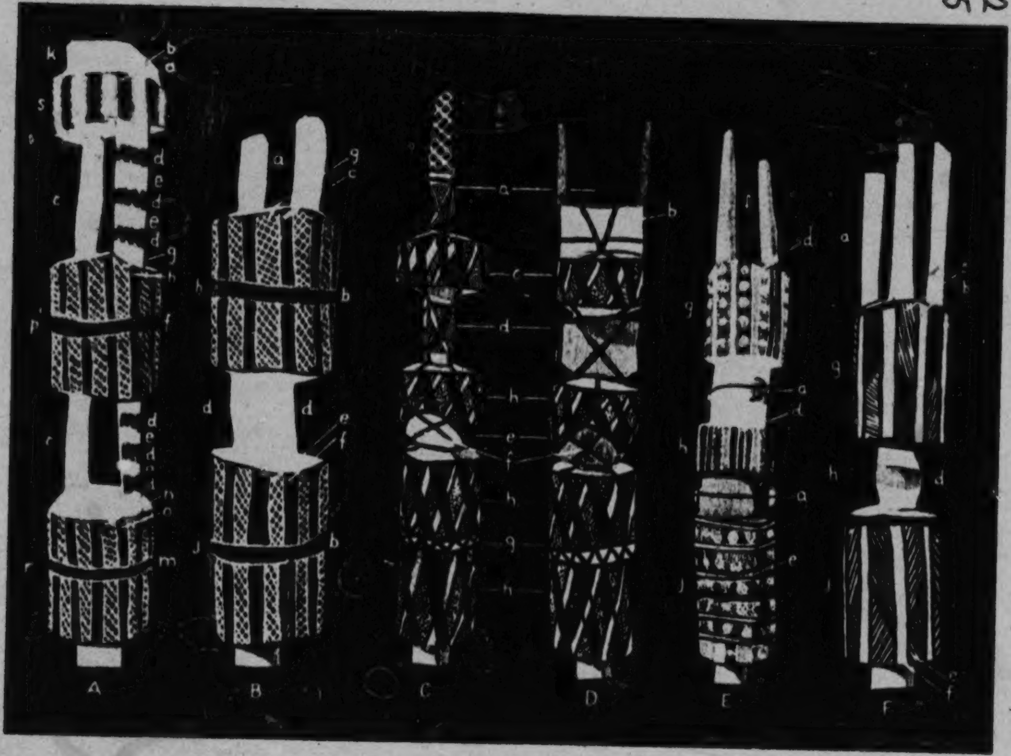

PLATE 34. *Carved and Painted Burial Poles*

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

[p.120 C]

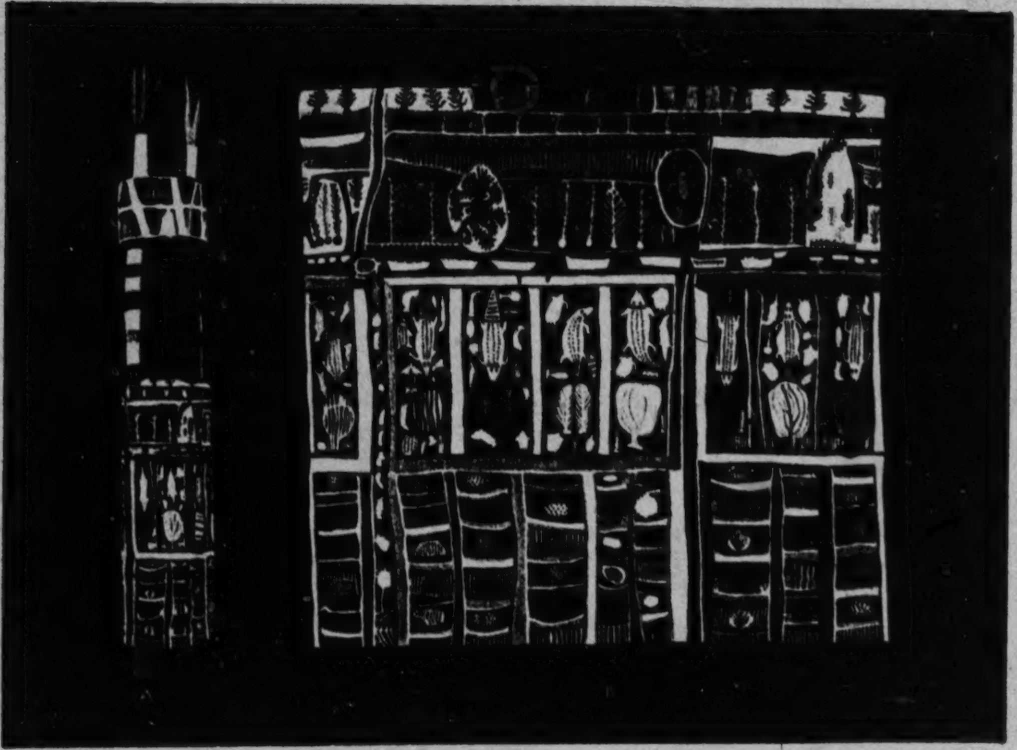

PLATE 35. *Carved and Painted Burial Poles* See also Fig. 9

532x
765

*532
765

[p.120 D]

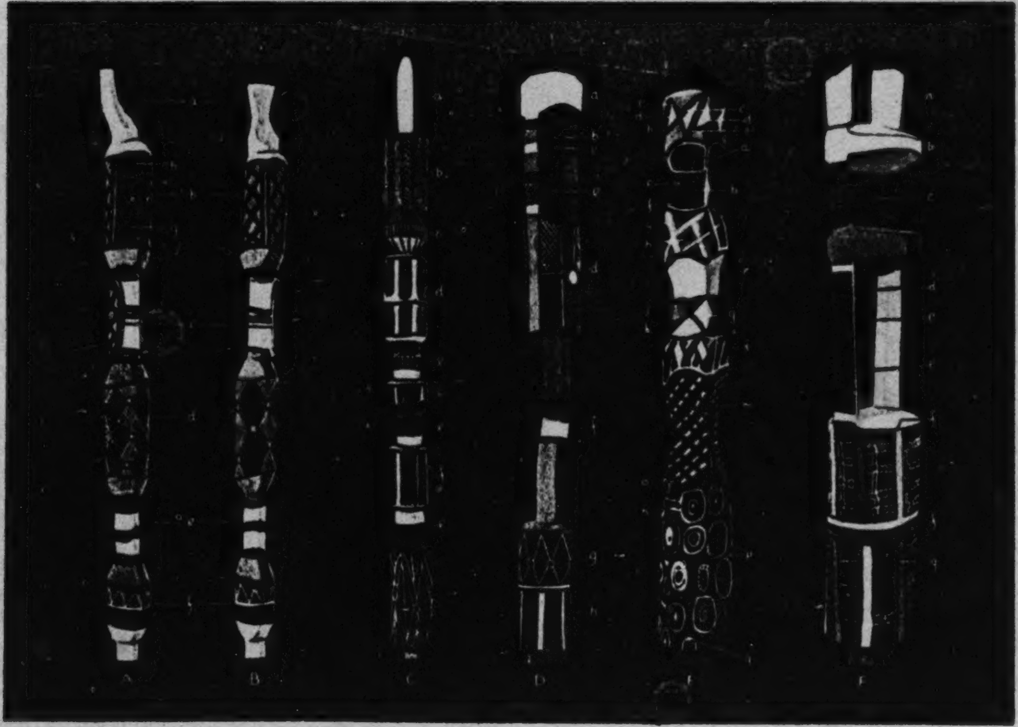

PLATE 36. *Carved and Painted Burial Poles*

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

[p.120 E]

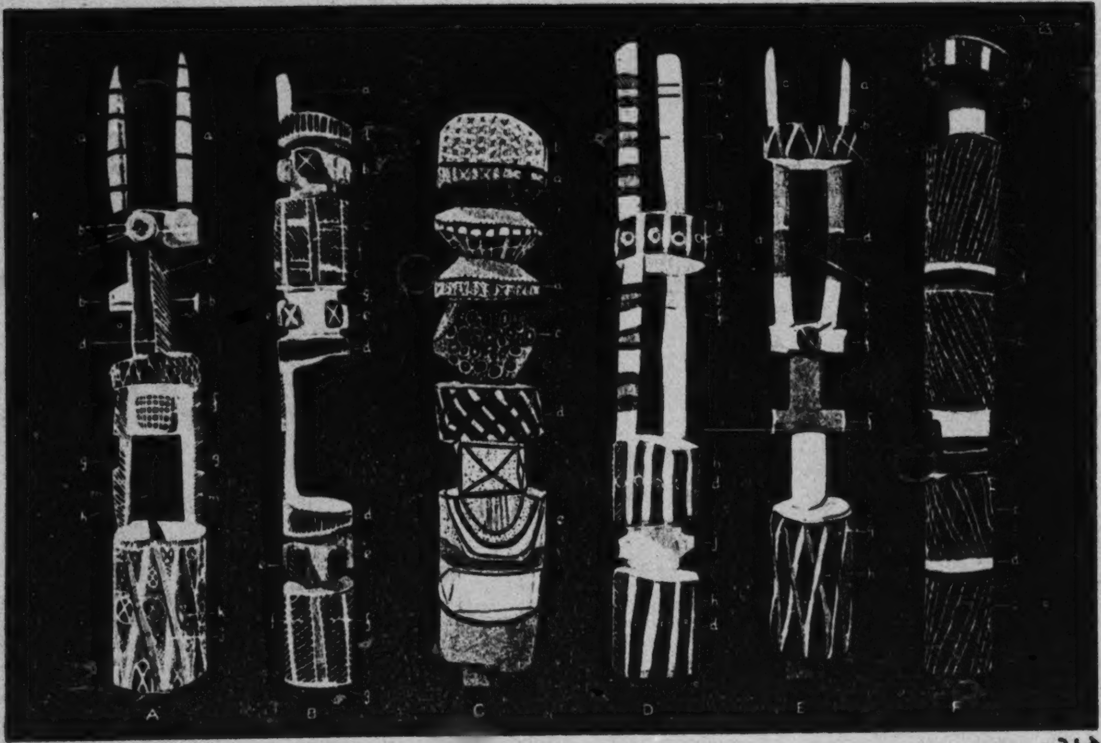

PLATE 37. *Carved and Painted Burial Poles*

532
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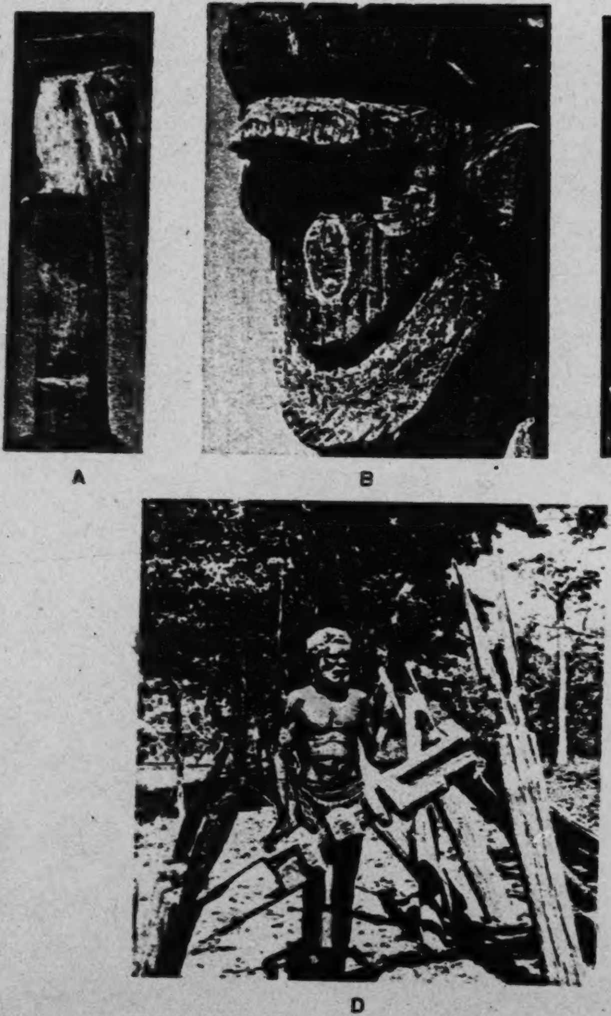
x532
765



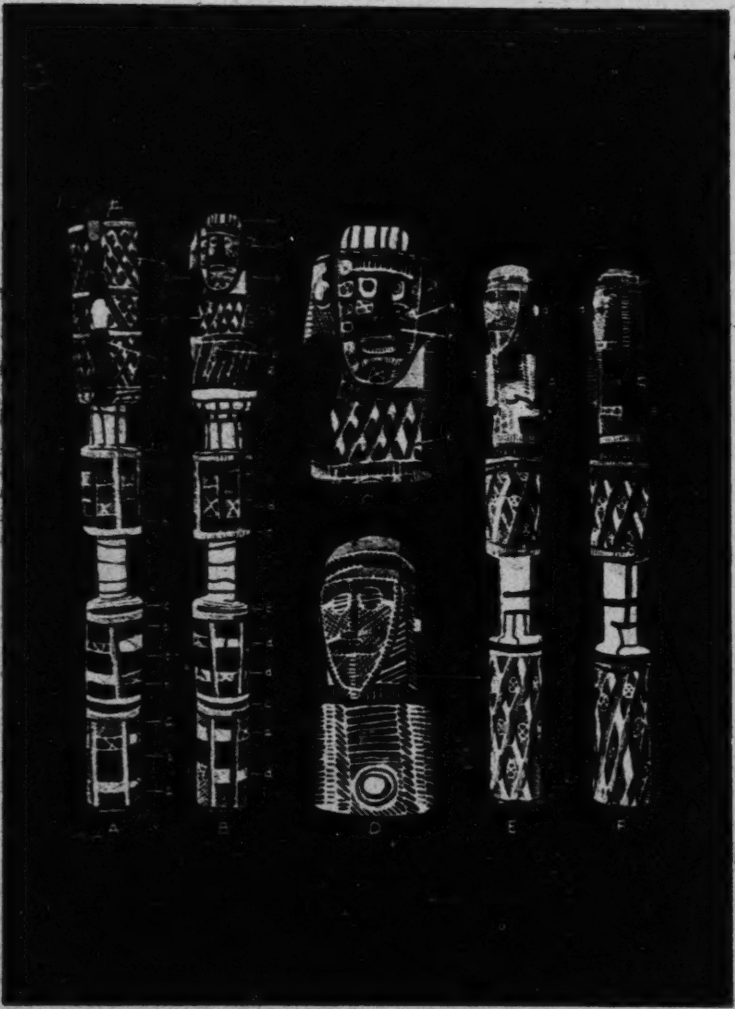
[291]
[142]
[302]
[516]

Plate 38. *Carved and Painted Burial Poles*
A, B, C, Carved and Painted Pole on Old Grave; D, Poles on Old Grave.

[p. 120 F]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958

OI20 Tiwi OI20



532x
765

PLATE 39. *Carved and Painted Burial Poles*

[p. 120 G]

x532
765

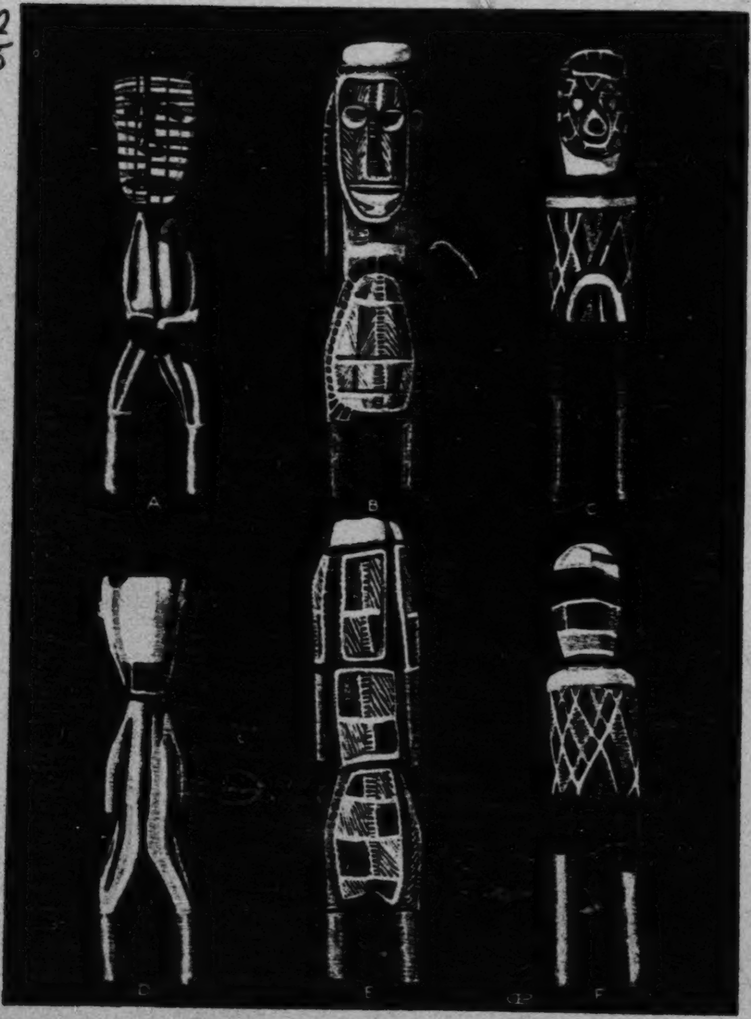
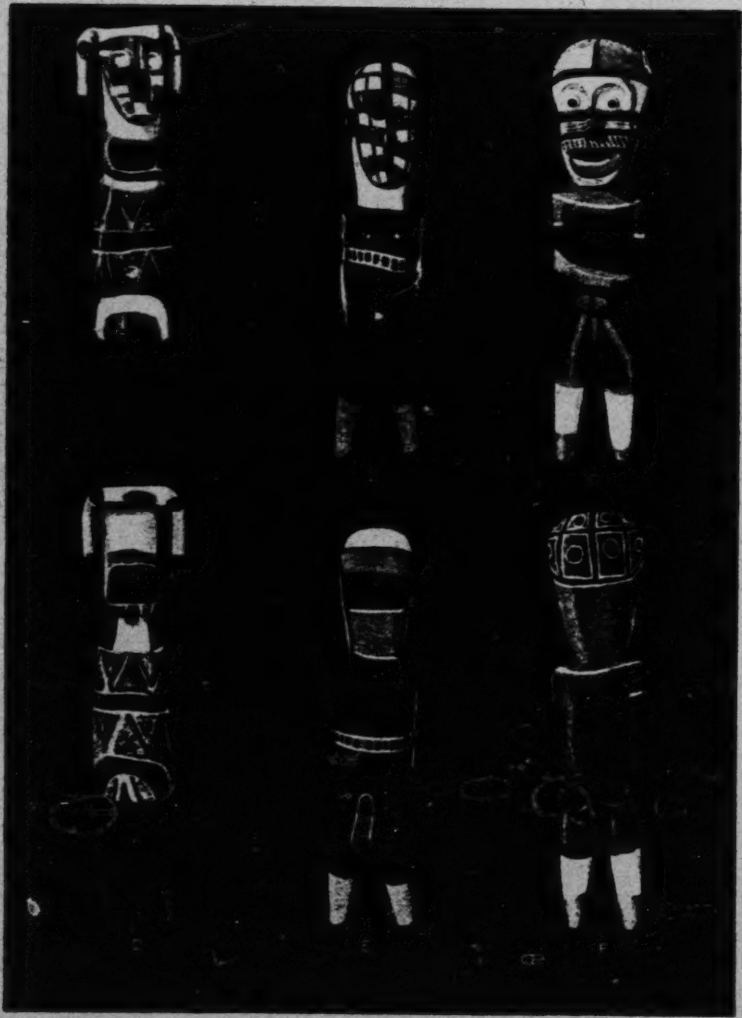


PLATE 40. *Carved and Painted Burial Figures*

[p. 120 H]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958

OI20 Tiwi OI20



532x
765

PLATE 41. *Carved and Painted Burial Figures*

[p. 120 I]

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[301]

[301]

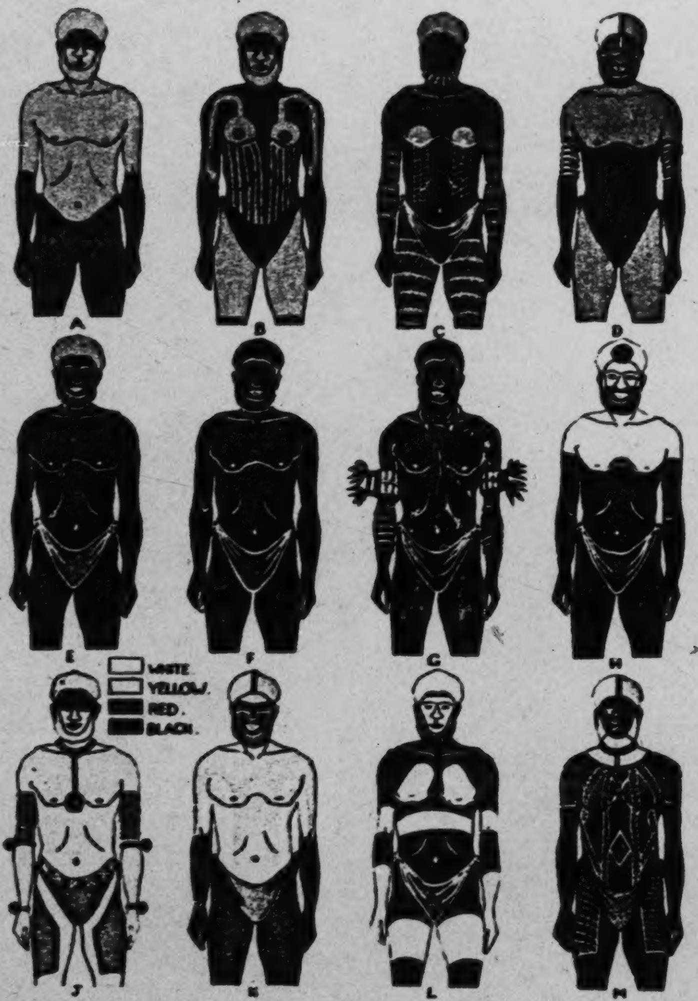
A
B
C
D
E
F
G
H
WHITE.
YELLOW.
RED.
BLACK.
J
K
L
M

Plate 42. *Body Decorations of the Kulama Initiation*
A, B, C, D, E, F, Marukamuni; G, Kilipaniati; H, Wadjeniati; J, K, Mikinatrina; L, Kulama Design; M, Mikinatarima, Mikintara and Mikingula.

[p. 120 J]

the forest, and the circles with crossed lines, the scarlet flowers of a eucalyptus tree lying on the ground. 532 x 765

The pole (Pl. 39D, E, F), also represents a man ready to take part in the final *pukamuni* rituals. The few scanty notes that I made at the time state that *a*, *a* (39E) are his arms, and *d*, *d*, his ears. At *f*, is his goose-feather ball, and *e* (39F) his backbone. The facial *pukamuni* decorations are shown on 39D.

Pl. 38A, B, C, are photographs of the pole on an old grave. The pole represents, in a simple way, an aboriginal wearing a hat. The ears are shown as bosses on either side of the face, and the arms, as projections, on either side of the body. The painted eyes and nose, which were not carved into the wood, such as on those illustrated on Pl. 39, can still be faintly seen on Pl. 38B.

Pl. 40A, D, and B, E, are two small full-length figures carved to represent the children of a dead man. To keep him company, these would be placed on the top of his burial poles.

Pl. 40C, F, is supposed to be a duplicate of the wooden figure carved by *Piamatilidjara*, at *Purukupali's* ceremony. The designs on the figure are those which the mythical man painted on his own body.

Pl. 41B, E, is *Purukupali's* son, *Djinini*, who died from the neglect of his mother, *Bima*, and was carried into the sea by his father (myth, p. 30).

Pl. 41C, F, pictures *Purukupali*, his face and body covered with *pukamuni* decorations, carrying his dead son (the transverse band across his abdomen) into the sea.

Pl. 41A, D, represents *Bima*, the wife of *Purukupali*. The designs are those which *Bima* painted on her body when she took part in the *pukamuni* of her husband.

CHAPTER IV

The Kulama Ceremony

114
881 ALTHOUGH little has been recorded about the colourful *pukamuni* burial rituals of the Tiwi, several investigators have published details of the *kulama* ceremony.

Spencer saw a *kulama* ceremony during March 1912. His records of those rituals (Spencer, 1928, pp. 658–76), the most complete we have, show that,
[179] during the last forty years the pattern has not changed to any extent. Although the names of the initiation grades given by Spencer do not agree with those recorded by later investigators, it is likely these differences are due to Spencer's interpreter, the buffalo shooter, Joe Cooper, who was not then fully conversant with the ceremony.

Fry (1949, p. 176), during 1913, witnessed an initiation ceremony in which Reuben Cooper, Joe Cooper's half-caste son, passed from the *Kolloponiati* (my *Kilipaniati*) stage to that of a *Wadjeniati*.

In the same year Fry (1950, pp. 79–80), saw the closing phases of the *kulama* from the peeling of the yam (p. 138), to the final rituals (p. 142). Although Fry was mistaken in considering that this ceremony was part of a burial rite, his record is a valuable and accurate description of the last two days of the *kulama*.

Hart (1930, p. 286), recorded the *kulama* initiation names and the duration of the grades of both male and female initiates. These names correspond closely to those I was able to obtain from the fully initiated men, with one exception. Hart stated that the grade of *Mikingula*, i.e., the fully initiated, lasted for four years. This is obviously incorrect, as the *Mikingula*, being the final grade, lasts for life.

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881 It appears certain that Tiwi initiation has ceased, although, I feel sure, within comparatively recent times. The *Mikingulas* often talked about initiating some of their companions, but when the opportunity came, they procrastinated.

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881 However, the same fully initiated men gave me full details of the rituals at each stage of initiation, explained how those rituals fitted into the *kulama* rituals we had witnessed, and either decorated themselves, or painted designs

on sheets of paper to illustrate the body markings used at each stage of 115 881
initiation.

To give a complete account of the full *kulama* which included initiation 128
as well as the preparation of the yam for food, I have included both groups of 881
rituals, as they would have been performed in the original *kulama* ceremony. 123
However, it must be borne in mind that we witnessed only the rituals belonging to the *kulama* yam. As stated before, the details of initiation were obtained from the fully initiated men.

I. THE MYTHOLOGICAL ORIGIN

(1) *The first Kulama Ceremony*

During *palaneri* (creation) times, not long before the death of *Purukupali*, 773
when all the animals and birds were still men and women, *Purutjikini*, a boo- 881
book owl-man, and his wife, *Pintoma*, a barn owl-woman, decided to perform the first *kulama* ceremony at Turiturina, in Port Hurd, south-western Bathurst Island (Fig. 1). They invited *Jirakati*, later the white-headed sea-eagle, and *Tupatupini*, the small owl, to be present, planning to make them the first initiates. Many other people assisted in the ceremony, the *Ninguais*, a small spirit people who still live in the mangrove swamps nearby; *Inwati*, *Mauwini* and *Taparalili*, three groups of the honey people; *Jirakupai*, the sea-going crocodile; *Narina*, the black cockatoo, and *Jurumu*, the wedge-tailed eagle.

Tukimbini, *Wuriuprinili* and a number of ancestral people from the eastern end of Melville Island, being opposed to the holding of the *kulama* ceremony, did not attend.

At the ceremony, the white-headed eagle, *Jirakati*, was the first *Wadjeniati* initiate (he still wears the ceremonial paint), and the owl, *Tupatupini*, the first *Mikinatrina*. There is no mention in the creation myths of the other grades of initiation.

When the first *kulama* ceremony was finished[18] the participants returned to their homes until the *pukamuni* of *Purukupali*, which was performed at the end of the *palaneri* (creation period). It was then that *Purutjikini*, the leader

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[18] Some informants referred to a fight which took place at the first *kulama* in which *Purutjikini* was attacked because he did not wait for some late-comers. Others described another quarrel which started when one of the *kulama* men followed a woman of the Kalalumruniri group into the mangrove swamps and raped her so badly that she died. The Kalalumruniri people attacked the performers of the *kulama*, killing some and driving others into the mangrove swamps where they live today as the *Ninguais*. The more elderly informants, *Tjamalampua* and *Malumorinine*, however, said that there were no quarrels at the first *kulama*.

773 881 of the *kulama* ceremony, became the boobook owl, his wife, *Pituana*, the barn owl, *Jurumu*, the wedge-tailed eagle, *Jirakati*, the white-headed sea-eagle, *Tupatupini*, a small owl, and so on.

(2) *The Second Kulama Ceremony*

After the close of *palaneri* times, the *Ninguuis*, a spirit people, who had been present at the first *kulama*, performed a second ceremony on the same island, Turiturina, as was used by *Purutjikini* during the creation period. On the second occasion, the *Ningauis* carried out the complete *kulama*, which included not only the preparation of the poisonous *kulama* yam for food, but also the performance of all the grades of initiation from that of the *Marukumuni* to the *Mikingula*.

At its completion, the *Ningauis* decreed that the form of the ceremony with its proceeding and initiation rituals, should always be the same. The [759] aborigines believe that if this form is altered, a mysterious sickness, called *saini* will punish them by making everyone ill.

(3) *The Myth of the Ningauis*

After the second *kulama*, the *Ningauis* made their home in the mangrove swamps of a small island, Imaluna, near Cape Helvetius, south-western Bathurst Island (Fig. 1).

776 The *Ningauis* are somewhat like the present-day aborigines, except that they are small people, about two feet high, with long hair and very short feet, their footmarks resembling those of an oversized dog. The aborigines often see these tracks on the edge of the mangrove swamps of Imaluna (Pl. 22c).

Should an aboriginal, when hunting through the swamps, go too near a home of the *Ningauis*, one of the *Ningauis* by calling, "Eeh", would cause the whole place to be suddenly enveloped in complete darkness. The native could bring the light back again by striking the trunk of a mangrove tree with a stick, but, in the meantime, the *Ningauis*, by taking advantage of the darkness, would have sneaked away. Therefore, no aboriginal has seen a *Ningaui* even though they are often heard in the mangrove swamps calling "Eeh, eeh", to each other.

When the *Ningauis* chant their songs after dark, the mangrove swamps become as brightly lit as in the day-time. There are stories of how aboriginal hunters, lured by the songs and the light, have wandered among the tangled mangroves to see what was going on, but as soon as the *Ningauis* heard the intruders, they finished their song with the word "Eeh",[16] which made the

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[533] [16] The *Ningaui* songs chanted by *Jibunglakumi*, at one of the *ilanias* of *Wanimpari* (p. 74), all ended with a long drawn-out "Eeh".

x
532
776

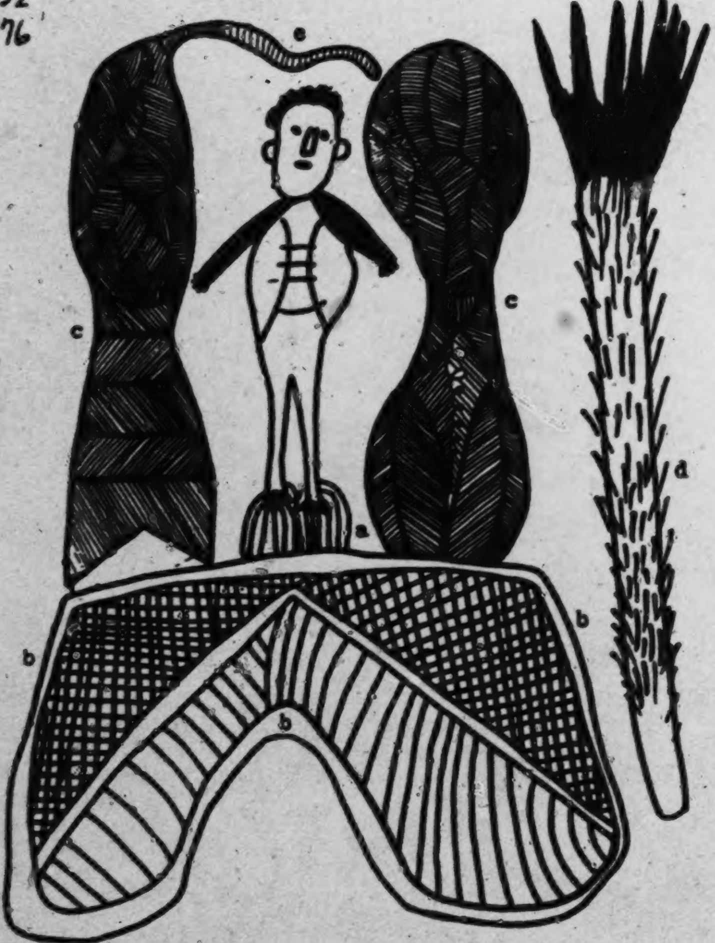

FIG. 10. *The Kulama Ceremony*
A Ningani in a Mangrove Swamp at Imalu,

776 place so dark, and the trees bend together so closely that the hunters lost their way and died. Some informants stated that the *Ningauis* cast a short throwing stick, similar to a *muruguna*, at all trespassing aborigines, rendering them insensible.

According to my informants, the *Ningauis*, who gather their food only at night, do not, at present, know the way to make fire, although they were able to do so at the time of the second *kulama*. Therefore, the crabs, shellfish and toredo worms they collect from the swamps, and the edible plants from the nearby jungles, have to be eaten raw.

x532 Two bark paintings and two crayon drawings deal with the *Ningaui* myth. On Plate 22D, the upper space, *a*, is a muddy flat in the middle of the mangrove island of Imaluna. At *b*, is an adjacent jungle; at *c*, a stream of fresh water nearby, and at *d*, *e*, are large dead eucalyptus trees lying in the water. At *f*, and *g*, are two pandanus trees; at *j*, *j*, salt-water creeks in the mangrove swamps; at *k*, *k*, etc., is the sea-shore at the mouth of those creeks, and cross-hatching at *m*, *m*, etc., the mud at the base of the mangrove trees. The squares, *h*, *h*, *h*, *h*, are the camps of the *Ningaui* people.

Plate 22C illustrates the footprints of the *Ningaui* in the swamps at Imaluna. The horse-shoe shaped designs are marks made in the mud by the front of the feet and toes, while the irregular circles, show the prints of the heels. The toe-marks are usually yellow and the heel-marks red. The dots are mangrove trees in the Imaluna swamps.

Fig. 10 is the copy of an aboriginal crayon drawing of a *Ningaui* on the mangrove island at Imaluna.

The central figure is a *Ningaui* standing on the roots, *a*, of a mangrove tree, which, in turn, is growing from a pile of rocks, *b*, *b*, *b*. On either side of the central figure are conventionalized mangrove trees, *c*, *c*; the designs on the lower portion represent the marks on the trunk, and on the upper portion, the foliage. At *e*, is a branch, and at *d*, a pandanus palm.

x532 881 Fig. 11 is a copy of another crayon drawing which illustrates the *Ningauis* holding the second *kulama* ceremony at Turiturina. The oven for cooking the *kulama* yam is at *a*, the dots surrounding it representing the upright sticks which keep the firewood in place.[19] The darker circle is the low mound of earth surrounding the ceremonial ground, on the inside of which a number of men are parading and chanting the *kulama* songs. Symbol *b*, indicates the leader of the *kulama* ceremony.

The symbols in circle *c* are the *Marukumuni* and *Mikinatrina* initiates, who do not take part in those particular rituals, and symbols *d*, in the outside

[19] See Pl. 41A.

circle, the women and children looking on. The designs radiating from the central circle represent a forest of eucalyptus trees. 532x 881

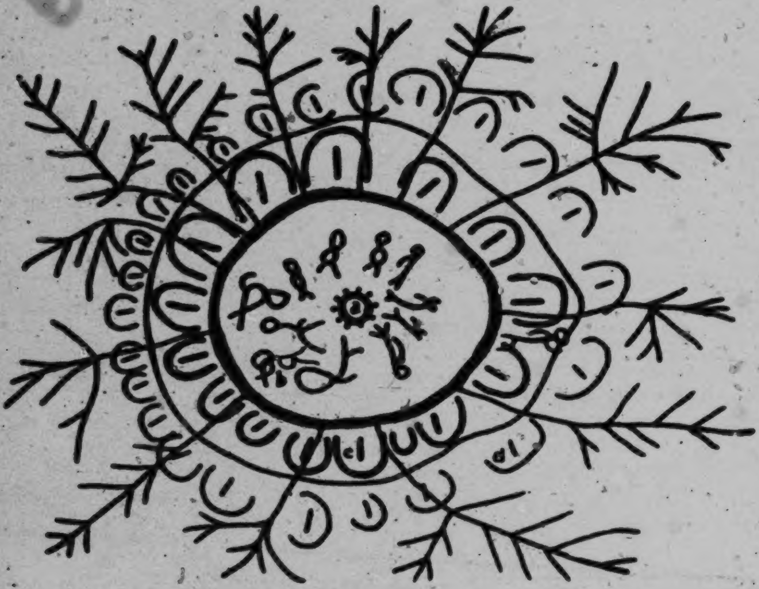

FIG. 11. *The Kulama Ceremony*
The Ningauis Performing the Second Kulama Ceremony.

KULAMA INITIATION

561 881

Grades of Kulama initiates		*Period of initiation*
Marukumuni	Male	From approximately April until next Kulama
Marukumuninga	Female	
Kilipaniati	Male	From Kulama, mid-March until the fruiting of the cycad, about mid-July
Kilipaniatinga	Female	
Wadjeniati	Male	From mid-July until the eating of the edible yam, at the next Kulama
Wadjeniatinga	Female	

561
881

Grades of Kulama initiates		*Period of initiation*
Mikinatrina	Male	2 years
Mikinatrininga	Female	
Mikintara	Male	From one kulama until the next
Mikintaringa	Female	
Mikiatarima	Male	From one kulama until the next
Mikiatariminga	Female	
Mikingula	Male	Fully initiated for life
Mikingulinga	Female	

2. THE PRELIMINARY RITUALS OF THE KULAMA

881 (1) *The Capture of the Marukumuni Initiate*

According to my informants, any tribesman chosen for initiation, must be a mature man, usually married and with children. In fact, all the men pointed out to me as being suitable candidates were thirty years of age or older.[18]

The first time there is a gathering of people after a *kulama* ceremony, such as at a burial, or an *ilania*,[19] the fully initiated *kulama* men, the *Mikingulas*, ask the permission of the leader of the *kulama*, the *Naripikilitipi*, to capture any man or woman, who is suitable for the first stage of initiation, that of the *Marukumuni*.[20] In preparation for this, the *Mikingulas* have already mixed a quantity of yellow ochre.

At a given signal, one of the *Mikingulas*, who has been standing unobtrusively near, suddenly throws his arms around the chosen initiate. The captive struggles to release himself, protesting against being initiated into the *kulama*. But a number of the *Mikingulas* rush to their companion's aid, lay [302] the struggling initiate on the ground, paint a design, in yellow, on his upper [301] arms and body (Pl. 42A), and put the red tail feathers of a black cockatoo in his hair. Meanwhile, other initiated men are walking around the group

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[178]
[114]

[18] The age of initiation has been raised since Spencer and Fry saw the *kulama* in the early days of the century. Spencer (1928, p. 665) refers to young boys, while Reuben Cooper, whom I knew in 1920 as a young man about twenty, would have only been about thirteen years of age when Fry saw him as a *Kilipaniai*.

[19] A preliminary ceremony for the burial rituals.

[20] I do not know who captures the female initiate, the *Marukumuninga*.

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532
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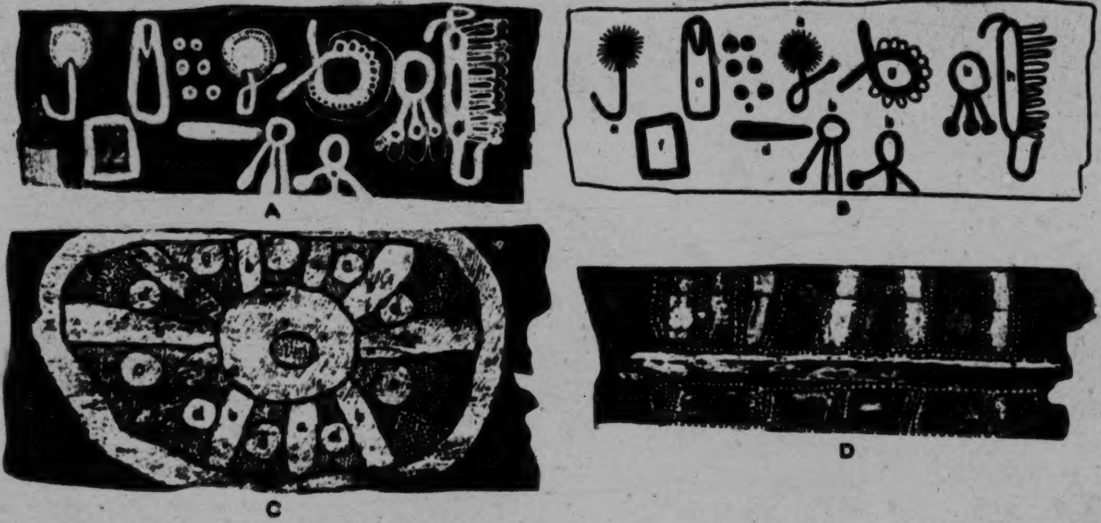

Plate 43. *Bark Paintings of the Kulama Ceremony*
A, B, Kulama Ornaments; C, The Kulama Ceremony; D, Food Baskets at a Kulama Ceremony.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958 OI20 Tiwi OI20

188 [516] [137]

[412] [302]

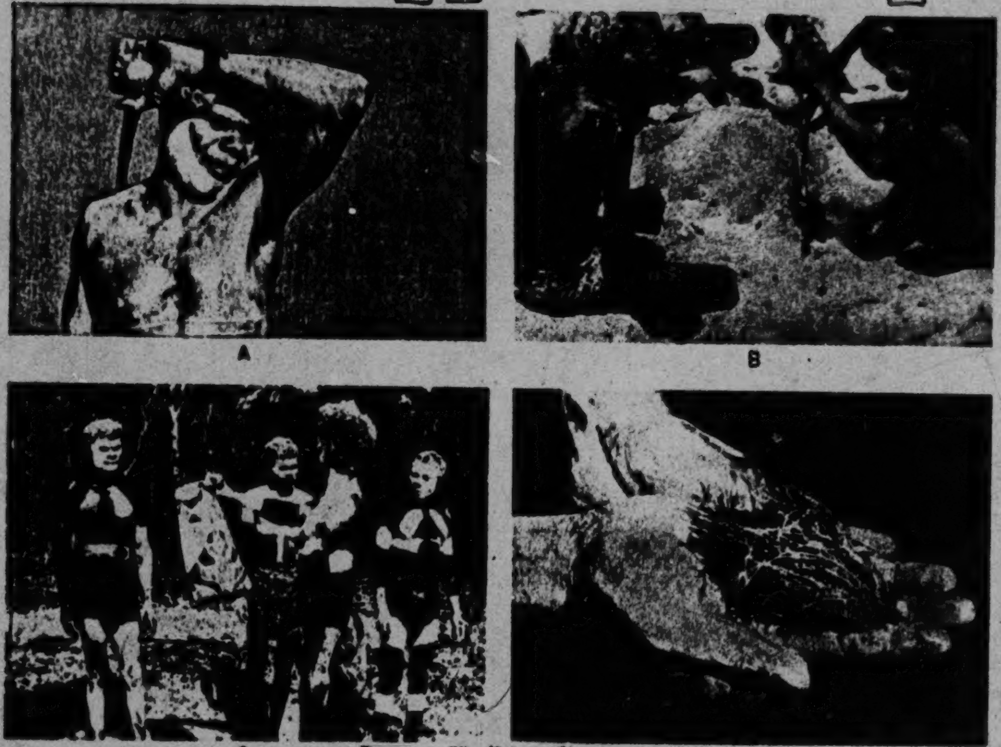

PLATE 44. *The Kulama Ceremony*

A, Chanting Kulama Songs; B, Placing Kulama Yams in Oven; C, Ritual before collecting Kulama Yam; D, The Kulama Yam.

[p.128 B]

chanting *kulama* songs. Later, the decorated initiate, now called a *Marukumani*, 881
is taken to the camp of the man who captured him. It is the duty of this man, now his guardian, to provide the initiate with food. However, he must not be given snakes, for such food would cause his joints to swell and become painful.

The guardian takes the food he has collected to the *Marukumani*'s wife who feeds her husband over a period of four days in the same manner as a *pukumani* man is fed (Pl. 24A). Neither she, nor any of the food he eats must touch the initiate's body. The food left over from the meal is wrapped in paper-bark and burnt. After four days this taboo is lifted and the *Marukumani* is free to hunt for and eat all foods, except snake.

(2) *The Eating of the Cycad Fruit*

About August, when the *fruit* of the cycad (*Cycas media*) is ripe, the [302]
Marukumani is decorated with a new design (Pl. 42B). At the same time the leader of the *kulama* ceremony instructs the women of the camp to collect and prepare a considerable quantity of the cycad fruit. As the fruit in its raw [252]
state is highly poisonous, it has to be shelled, pounded out flat, and soaked in running water for three days before it is edible. When the fruit is ready for eating, the women, putting it in a number of bark baskets, stand them on either side of a log (Pl. 43D).

Then, while the women walk around the baskets, chanting the songs of [533]
the *kulama*, two *Mikingulas* wash the design (Pl. 42B), from the *Marukumani's* [302]
body, and decorate him with a new one (Pl. 42C). This, he must renew continuously until he hears the first sounds of thunder (about mid-November).

As soon as these decorations are completed a member of each family picks up a basket, takes it to their camp, and all have a meal.

The *Marukumani* initiate, however, is fed by his wife from a separate store of cycad fruit.

At the same time as the *kulama* leader sent the women of the camp to collect and prepare the cycad fruit for the *Marukumani* rituals, he instructed the women of the *Kilipaniasinga* grade to do the same. However, when the other women of the camp placed their baskets of prepared food beside the log, the *Kilipaniasinga* women poured their cycad fruit on a nearby pad of grass, pushed four sticks into the ground around the heap and seated themselves on the outside.

The ceremonial activity then centred around the men and women of the 301
Kilipaniai grade of initiation, who, from the previous *kulama* until then, 881

98 had worn continuously their curious ornaments, *mariguani* (Pl. 42G),[14] [301] around their necks as well as many cane and bark ornaments on their arms. During the whole of that period (about five months) they renewed their body paint continuously. They were not allowed, however, to scratch their heads with their hands, but must use for that purpose a special pointed stick, *murubunga* (Pl. 32F).

The rituals began when one of the *Mikingulas*, coming up behind the male [302] *Kilipaniati*, cut the *mariguani* from the neck of the initiate, poured water over him to remove his body paint, and decorated him with the design of a *W'adjeniati* (Pl. 42H). Similarly, the husband of the female initiate cut her neck ornament, washed her and redecorated her as a *Wadjeniatinga*. After eating their store of cycad fruit, these new initiates resumed the normal life of the tribe.

About mid-November, thunder and other signs of the oncoming wet season are signals for the *Marukumuni* to discard the design he has been wearing since the ceremonial eating of the cycad fruit. As soon as this hap- [301] pens the men paint another design on his body (Pl. 42D), put new cockatoo [302] feathers in his hair, and many cane armlets on his arms. The initiate wears these decorations, continuously renewing his body paint, until the ceremonial eating of the edible yam, which takes place at the beginning of the *kulama* ceremony about four months later.

3. THE KULAMA CEREMONY

(1) *Collecting and Eating the Edible Yams*

Toward the end of January, when the wet season was approaching its climax, the *kulama* leader instructed the women to go into the jungle, locate a number [262] of the young plants of two species of edible yams, a long one, *juruguni*, and a short one, *karawani* and show them to him so that he would know when they would be ready to eat.

When some weeks later, the leader estimated that the yams were fit for digging and the tall, annual grass was about to shed its seed, he called the people together and told them that the *kulama* rituals would start in a few days.[15]

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[14] Spencer, 1918, Pl. 12, No. 4, illustrates a *mariguani*.

[15] From the time of this announcement until the finish of the *kulama* ceremony, no [834] fully initiated man, must sleep with his wife. If he does, he will be attacked by *taini*, the mysterious *kulama* sickness, and die. I did not find out the characteristics of the *kulama* sickness.

On the morning of the appointed day, the women went into the jungle, 881
dug up a large number of both species of yams, brought them back to camp,
and prepared them for cooking.

In the meantime, the male and female *Marukumuni* initiates had been sent to an appointed place in the jungle and told to wait until some of the *Mikingulas* visited them in the late afternoon. In the meantime other fully initiated men were painting the *Wadjeniati* initiates with a new body design (Pl. 42E).

In the late afternoon some members of the *kulama* party went to the place 302
where the *Marukumuni* initiates were hiding, painted them black (Pl. 42E), 881
and put new cockatoo feathers in their hair. While this was being done the
male initiates pulled out their pubic hairs, and calling out "Booh-booh",
threw them in all directions. When the decorations were complete, each
initiate singed the hair from his legs but not his face, head or arms.[23] It is [821]
believed that this *Marukumuni* ritual assists in creating more thunder-
storms and so prolonging the wet season.

Meanwhile, the remainder of the higher grades of the *kulama*, the *Mikin-* 881
gulas, the *Mikiatarimas* and the *Mikintaras* with their female counterparts,
went into the forest and, cutting the bark of the milk-wood tree (*Alstonia* [386]
sp.) used the white sap to paint their shoulders and faces, and to make a [824]
line down the centre of their abdomens. The men also put thick sap on their
beards, which made them stand out stiffly around their faces.[24]

By the time the *Marukumuni* initiates had been decorated, brought back to camp and seated behind a low screen of boughs, the edible yams were cooked and ready for eating.

The leader, taking one of the *juruguni* and one of the *karawani* yams, bit a
small portion from each, chewed it up and spat it in all directions. His actions
were repeated by all the fully initiated people. The aborigines believe that the [775]
portions of chewed-up yam make the *mopaditis* so sick (they are always
present to watch the *kulama* rituals), that they leave the locality. All the [824]
kulama people, with the exception of the *Marukumuni* and *Wadjeniati* initiates
then sat down to a meal of the edible yams.

The male initiates of the *Marukumuni* and *Wadjeniati* grades were given
their food by the female initiates of their grade in the same manner as a
pukamuni man, i.e., the food was placed in their mouths, it must not touch any [753]
part of their body. If this taboo were broken, the *mopaditis* would make them [626]
ill.

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[23] The female initiates do not carry out this ritual.

[24] Spencer, 1928, p. 660, Pl. 463, who refers to this phase in his description of the *kulama* illustrates the decorated men.

88 iii. The *Marukumunis* were fed behind their bark shelter and the *Wadjeniatis* in the open camp.

(2) *The Opening Rituals*

After dark, on the day following the ceremonial eating of the edible yam, the fully initiated *kulama* men, and all people above the grade of *Mikinatrina*, prepared for the opening ceremony by clearing an oval about fourteen feet long and six feet wide. The *Marukumuni* initiates were brought from their hiding place, the *Wadjeniatis* from their camp and both were seated just outside the ceremonial ground. Neither of these grades, however, took part in the opening rituals.

[372] [753] In the middle of the ceremonial ground were two smouldering logs, but no flames, for fear of attracting *taini*, the *kulama* sickness. Among the trees outside of the ring, were a number of families of uninitiated men, women and children.

Normally the *kulama* party would have been made up of *Mikintaras*, *Mikiatarimas* and *Mikingulas*, and the songs chanted by the men in that order.

177 533 881 539 On the occasion of our visit the ceremony opened when a *Mikingula*, *Wurarbuti*, seated on the ground, beating his throwing sticks, started to hum a song softly. Becoming more confident, he stood up, and pacing backward and forward still beating his sticks, chanted the following three songs.[88]

(*a*) "My father was king, therefore I am the Prince of Wales. As King George was King, so was the old man on the hill, my (dead) father. I will have warships, money and a flag of red and white." When the singer mentioned his dead father there was a high-pitched wail among the near relatives.

(*b*) The second song dealt with the invitation he had received to dance before the Queen of England. "When the Queen was in England, she said 'I would like to see a black-fellow dance', and so I went up. King Philip watched me a lot while I danced."

(*c*) "My uncle in Darwin said to me 'Why haven't you made a lot of *pukamuni* arm rings. If you don't soon do so, you'll cause a lot of trouble among the *pukamuni* people."

Muramajua also chanted three songs;

(*a*) In the first, of which I did not collect the words, he explained, at length, how a slow canoe journey had made him late for a recent *pukamuni* ceremony.

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[88] This man, who was the ceremonial leader of the *pukamuni* ceremony, described earlier, had been invited, only a few months previously, to visit the southern States, and dance before the Queen of England. Naturally, this left such a strong impression on his mind that many of his songs dealt with that remarkable experience.

(*b*) "I was sick in the Darwin hospital. Sister Philips said it was because I had had too much grog." 533 539 881

(*c*) "There was a man at Cockle Point (opposite the Bathurst Island Mission), who wanted to kill me with a spear. So I changed myself into a mullet and he didn't see me."

Another singer chanted,

(*a*) "I am a goose and a man cast his throwing stick and hit me." 533

(*b*) "I want that girl from Bathurst Island to wash her with fresh water to make it square for giving away my sister."[86] 539 881

Another *Mikingula*, *Palitara*, aired his differences with a woman, *Batali*, in the following song.

(*a*) "I fed *Batali*, but she did not give her daughter to me as a wife."[87]

(3) *Collecting the Kulama Yam*

Early on the following morning, the *Mikinarrimas*, *Mikintaras*, the *Mikiatarimas* and *Mikingulas*, went to the ceremonial ground of the previous evening. They first dipped their hands in a bark container filled with water, throwing some over their bodies; then, taking a mouthful, they squirted water into the air in imitation of rain, afterwards calling out "Oom-oom", to symbolize thunderstorms. Taking two small sticks, one in each hand, the men used them to clean the wax from their ears, afterwards standing the sticks upright in the ground.[88] 881 [515]

Placing their palms on a sheet of bark covered with white paint, the men patted their hair, chest, wrists and pubes (Pl. 44c), turning toward the north as they again called out "Oom-oom", in imitation of thunder.

Following this ritual, each *kulama* man painted another with a design in white (Pl. 42L). The leader then picked up the bark basket, held it on his arm, and facing north, south, east and west, again called "Oom-oom", while he made a drum-like sound, symbolical of thunder, by hitting the basket with his hand. After this the men set out to collect the *kulama* yams. They were

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[86] I did not find out the significance of this ritual.

[87] When a woman promises her daughter to a man, it is the duty of the future son-in-law to give her continuous presents of food. On this occasion, the woman had accepted *Palitara's* gifts, but when her daughter was old enough, she gave the girl to another man. [584]

Quarrelling at a *kulama* ceremony is forbidden, otherwise *taini*, the *kulama* sickness, will destroy all the participants. This prohibition allows an aboriginal, such as *Palitara*, to air his grievances without causing a quarrel, even though, as on this occasion, the defaulting person was present. [626] [753]

[88] The meaning of this ritual is obscure. According to the aborigines it prevents trouble and quarrelling during the *kulama* rituals.

881 led by the *Mikinatrinas*, carrying the baskets, followed by the *Mikinsaras*,
the *Mikiatarimas*, and the *Mikingulas*. No *kulama* woman accompanied this
party.

As the *kulama* men entered the jungle they separated, each searching for
vines which indicated the presence of the yam.[30] Before digging, however, the
[824] *kulama* men, softly calling "Oom-oom", gently patted the ground to wake
[758] up the yams, for, should any yam get a fright, its spirit, becoming annoyed,
would make everyone ill with the *kulama* sickness. When digging the yams,
the men were most careful not to break even one of the fine roots (Pl. 44D).

On filling in the holes, the men again made the thunder call, "Oom-oom",
[821] which, they said, would cause more rain to fall before the day was over. One
aboriginal accidentally broke a *kulama* yam while digging it. Instantly, he
was on his feet, and, with the broken yam in his palm, dodged in and out
among the trees, to escape the spirit of sickness released by the angry yam.
After a few minutes, however, he returned, placed the broken yam carefully
in the basket with the rest, and resumed his digging. His companions said
that it was fortunate that he had only damaged the yam slightly, otherwise,
its spirit would have made not only the careless aboriginal, but all of the
kulama people ill.

When sufficient yams were collected, the party returned to camp in the same order as they went out, i.e., *Mikinatrinas*, *Mikinsaras*, *Mikiatarimas* and *Mikingulas*. The *Mikinatrinas* carried the yams to the foot of a bloodwood tree, called the *wuringalita*, cleared the grass from around the base and, taking the yams from the basket, placed them on the ground. They were covered with leaves by the female initiates, the *Mikinatriningas*.

(4) *The Preparation of the Ceremonial Ground*

In the late afternoon, the *kulama* men and the male initiates, excluding the *Marukumuni* and the *Wadjeniatis*, prepared the ceremonial ground, the *milimika*.

372 The men walked toward an open space in the forest, and with low cries,
881 beat the ground with sticks, while the leader, pulling up a tuft of grass, threw
it into the air. At the place where it fell, the men dug a small circle, the
tunarapi (navel), in which the yams were to be cooked. Then, sitting down,
the men pushed the sand and grass outwards with their feet until the *milimika*,
about fifteen feet in diameter, was cleared and surrounded by a low mound of
earth and grass.

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[222] [30] The *kulama* yam (*Dioscorea sativa*, variety *rotunda*) (Pl. 44D), is about the size of a
[137] hen's egg and covered with hairs similar to a beard. It is held in the palm of the hand until
it is placed carefully in the bark basket.

Dry sticks, about three feet in length, were pushed upright into the ground 88
around the *sunarapi* (oven), kindling wood was laid between them, other [372]
pieces of dried wood piled cross-wise between the uprights until there was a stack about three feet high (Pl. 45A).

(5) *Placing the Uncooked Yams in Water*

About sunset, the *kulama* men went to the bloodwood tree, the *waringalea*, where the *Mikinatrinas* had stored the yams in the morning and, on pulling bushes away, revealed some of the male and female *Marukumuni* initiates squatting, holding in their arms a basket of the uncooked *kulama* yams. The *Marukumuni* initiates took the yams to the water, everyone assisting in laying them on a pad of grass in the bed of the stream (Pl. 46a).

Immediately this task was completed, the *kulama* men pushed the *Marukumuni* initiates over,[20] and, holding them by the legs and arms dragged them backward and forward through the now muddy water to wash off their body paint. They were then taken back to camp, seated beside the *milimika* and [302]
painted with a different pattern (Pl. 42F). Neither the *Marukumuni* nor the *Wag̃oniati* initiates took any further part in the rituals of that day. When, after dark, the *kulama* men entered the *milimika* to chant another series of songs, the camp fires were allowed to burn brightly, because the aborigines said that the yams, being in the water, were now "quiet" so that there was no fear of *taini*, the spirit of *kulama* sickness.

The chanting men walked counter-clockwise around the *milimika* because *Puruŋjikini* did so at the first *kulama*. To have walked in the opposite direction, even then, would have made the spirit of the *kulama* yam angry. 881

The following are literal translations of a selection of the songs. 533

(*a*) "I had a quarrel with Tom Crow, the Superintendent of Snake Bay 539
Settlement." [177]

(*b*) "My mother-in-law is good to me, she did not take away my promised wife."

(*c*) "The fruit of the *binamis* (*Eugenia* sp.) ripens and falls to the ground."

(*d*) "The little *Pitipituis* (spirit children) are dancing on the beach."

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[20] Spencer, 1928, p. 664, describing a similar ritual, states, "Several old men seized [114]
the *Wadjinguri* (my *Wag̃oniati*), and plunged into the water with him. As many as could get near him gripped him by the legs and arms, and yelling, splashing and churning up the mud, . . . dragged him backward and forward several times, . . . As soon as the *Wadjinguri* were released, the men turned their attention to the *Marukumuni* boys. . . ." Although my informants did not say so it is likely that the *Wag̃oniati* initiates were also pushed into the water to remove their body paint in readiness for the second design of a *Mikinatrina* (Pl. 42B).

533 (*e*) "The salt water (sea), brings plenty of drift-wood up on the beach for
539 our fires."

881 (*f*) "The *tudawali* (shark) killed a stingray."

(*g*) "The boat sails fast and the waves are beating its sides."

At approximately 8.30 p.m. the chanting ceased and the aborigines retired to their camps.

(6) *The Lighting of the Ceremonial Fire*

About 6.30 the next morning, the *Mikinatrininga* women collected pieces
[137] of termite mound and put them on the top of the sticks for the fire which had been piled over the oven, the *tumorapi*. This fire could be lit by any man above the grade of *Mikinatrina*. Whilst the fire was burning down, the *Mikingulas* walked around it, and sang a few *kulama* songs, only one of which was recorded.

[177] (1) "When I see the shining iron of the new schoolhouse, I think how my children will go to school and wear boots."[81]

881 By 9.30 a.m. after everyone had had a meal, most of the aborigines, including several children, painted themselves in red and made their way to the swamp to take part in the ritual of bringing the *kulama* yams from the water, to the *milimika*.

On reaching the swamp, the leader took the yams from the pad of grass under the water, placed them carefully in the basket, with a bundle of rushes plucked from a nearby swamp on top, then, putting the basket on his shoulder, carried it to the *milimika* and stood it beside the fire "to warm up the yams".

881 The *Mikingulas*, walking anti-clockwise as before, chanted another series
533 of songs.
539

[177] (*a*) "I went to Native Affairs (Darwin), drew out £10 (with which to gamble) and bought a pack of playing cards."[82]

Striding around the ring with two spears in one hand and a throwing stick in the other, the same man sang

(*b*) "I have many spears. If the white people were not here, I would kill you all."

881 At the end of the song, the performer called out the name of his dead
765 father, striking himself on the head with his throwing stick to indicate his sorrow. The people on the outside of the ring cried in sympathy.

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[185] [81] A parent's hope in a changing society that his children will live at a higher social level that the one which he himself occupies.

[82] A number of the younger Melville Islanders work for extended terms in Darwin, periodically returning to their homeland to take part in the ceremonies.

After a pause, another aboriginal entered the ring and sang about the 881 previous singer's dead father. 765

(6) "My stomach gets hot like fire,[35] when I think of you, my uncle." [533] Some of the women cried when the song was finished. [539]

(7) *Cooking the Kulama Yam*

When the fire had burnt down to a bed of coals, the men picked up the 252 fragments of burning wood, throwing them in all directions, scraped out the 881 glowing embers with sticks, brushed the ashes from the heated termite mound with boughs, and the oven was ready for cooking the *kulama* yams. Meanwhile, one of the men had bound the rushes into a rope, *imbini*, about an inch in diameter, and sufficiently long to encircle the oven. The fragments of heated termite mound were lightly sprinkled with water, the *imbini* rope coiled around them, the yams carefully arranged on top and the whole covered first with thin sheets of newly split paper-bark, then with sand. Care was taken to cover the yams properly, otherwise, the aborigines explained, *saini*, the *kulama* sickness, would escape and cause blindness to the immediate participants.

As the oven was being covered, the leader patted the sand to consolidate 881 it (Pl. 44B), chanting at the same time, "Brr, Brr, Goodbye, Grandmother, [533] goodbye",[36] in the same way as the owl-man, *Purukupali*, did at the first [539] *kulama*.

While the yams were being cooked, the *kulama* people performed the 535 following dances, to the rhythm of sticks beaten by the women. 881

(*a*) The dance of *jiriwa* (silver-crowned friar-bird). [534]

(*b*) Two crocodiles, *jirakupai*, fighting (Pl. 30E), followed by two aborigines as crocodiles crawling in the sand.

(*c*) A crocodile; the dancer carrying the goose-feather ball (*tokwianga*) in his mouth to symbolize the prey of the crocodile.

(*d*) The green turtle with the hands and arms of the dancer moving in imitation of the turtle's flippers.

Two young women, when asked to dance, performed:

(*e*) The crocodile, *jirakupai*,

(*f*) The buffalo,

(*g*) The shark (Pl. 30C).

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[35] The stomach, or solar-plexus, is the location of the *imunka* (spirit), and the seat of the emotions. [826]

[36] The *kulama* yam is looked upon as a female when it is dug up, placed beside the overhanging tree and immersed in the water for the first time. When taken from the swamp it is male, again becoming female from the time it is put in the oven until it is eaten. [774] [824]

(8) *Cutting up the Yams*

881 After the yams had been in the oven for about one and a half hours, the
252 men gathered around the oven, felt it, and, after a short discussion began to scrape the warm sand away from the paper-bark covering. As they did so, they pressed handfuls of the warm sand against their elbows, chest, shoulders and knees, believing that this sand made their joints strong and supple (Pl. 45C).

When the paper-bark, carefully removed strip by strip, exposed the
881 cooked yams, the women, who had been quietly standing on the outside of the *milimika* murmured reverently, "Ah, *kulama*, ah, *kulama*." Taking the hot yams from the oven each man held them against his chest, and his
[827] head. This they said would give them added strength and vitality. The women although they did not participate in this ritual, sent their children into the *milimika* to have the yams pressed against their bodies so that they would grow to healthy and strong adults.

As the men peeled the yams, exposing the soft, yellow flesh, they sang
[177] about preparing and eating various kinds of food belonging to the white
[533] man,[88] "cutting bread for a meal, carving steak from a bullock and roasting it on the coals, cooking the tongue of a bullock, eating corn beef", and so on. When all the yams were peeled they were left on a sheet of bark whilst
[412] everyone had a meal and a sleep. In the late afternoon the *kulama* men started to slice the yams (cockle shells, *irakapi*, were used before the advent of steel).
[177] As they did so, the men mashed up some of the sliced *kulama* between the palms of the hands, mixed this with red ochre, and each rubbed it on his hair, face, whiskers and body. This, they believed, aided by the earlier rituals, would ensure them good health until the next *kulama*.

(9) *Initiation of the Kilipaniatis and Mikinatrinas*

The sliced yams were put in the basket, and stood in the centre of the *milimika*. A *kulama* man walked into the forest, and collected a length of flexible vine. Returning to the *milimika* he bent the vine round the necks of the male *Marukumunis* and the female *Marukumuningas* in such a way that it could not be removed. These initiates were then *Kilipaniatis* and *Kilipan-*
[301] *iatingas* respectively. This neck ornament, which had a number of cords hanging from it, is called a *mariguani* (Pl. 42G). After these initiates had been further decorated with bark armlets, *tjunguris*[89] (Pl. 42D and G), and cane

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[88] No doubt, in times past, they sang about abundant supplies of their own favourite foods.

[89] Spencer, 1928, illustrates the bark armlets, *tjunguris*, on Pl. XI and the belt, *adariad*, on Pl. IX, No. 1.

arm rings, *jairinas* (Pl. 31M), they seated themselves outside the *milimika*, 881
but took no part in the subsequent rituals. [301]

Other fully initiated men led initiates of the *Wadjeniasi* grade to the *waringalias* tree, where the yams had been stored on the second morning, told them to sit down and erected a low screen of boughs in front so that the initiates could not be seen from the *milimika*.

The *Mikingulas* first painted the bodies of the *Wadjeniasi* initiates with 881 302
yellow paint, then decorated them with many cane rings, *jairinas* (Pl. 31H), [301]
on their upper arms, hair-string belts, *ularimi*, around their waists and goose-feather balls, *sokwiangas* (Pl. 31B), on their necks, arms and wrists (see Pl. 42J). This ritual admitted them to the grade of *Mikinatrina* and *Mikinatriningas* respectively.

After the *Wadjeniasi* initiates were decorated, the senior grades of the *kulama* painted their faces, bodies, hair and beards with elaborate designs in red, yellow, black and white. In one design, peculiar to the *kulama*, the aborigines covered one side of their faces with red paint, and the other side with black,[87] the two colours being separated with a line of yellow (Pl. 42M). The men painted a complex design, usually in red and white on their hair and beards.[88] Some of the men also decorated their children.

The leader of the *kulama* then assembled everyone to see the *Mikinatrina* 535
initiates perform their first dance, which they had been quietly practising for 881
some time.

At a given signal, each *Mikinatrina* stood up in turn and, gaily decorated with body paint and coloured ceremonial ornaments, and holding a flat fighting club, *juruwila*, in either hand, performed his first dance. As each [201]
initiate danced, the assembled people applauded, slapping their buttocks in approbation of both the dancing and the appearance of the initiates.

When the *Mikinatrinas* had finished their dance, the female initiates, the *Mikinatriningas*, similarly decorated, but without the clubs, individually performed their dances. Still painted and wearing their decorations, the male and female *Mikinatrinas* seated themselves outside of the *milimika* beside the newly created *Kilipaniasis*.

After the initiates had finished their dances, several of the *Mikingulas* [533]
entered the *milimika* and chanted another series of secular songs.

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[87] Spencer, 1928, p. 674, who saw a *kulama* ceremony during 1911, refers to this curious form of facial decoration.

[88] The method of colouring the hair with intricate designs is of some interest. The aboriginal, loading his fingers and thumb with wet ground-up ochre, pinched the hair, instead of rubbing the colour into it. By this means, the operator was able to keep sharp well-defined edges to the design, an effect that could not be achieved in any other way.

177 533 539 881 *Wurarbui* described some of his experiences when he visited Brisbane to dance before the Queen of England.

(*a*) "I saw the big boat, Marella, beside the jetty at Brisbane, many motor cars, boats and trains. The boats went under a big bridge over the river, and across that bridge went the motor cars. The ship's flags were flying."

Another man sang.

(*b*) "The *tapalingas* (stars) are like those on the American flag in Darwin. They lifted the flag up in the morning, and let it down at night."

(*c*) "The *taduwali* (shark) swims about the sea looking for stingrays."

[535] The onlookers applauded this song and asked the singer to perform the shark dance (Pl. 300), which he did to the delight of all.

(*d*) "I am a wireless man, and have sent native tucker (food) all over Australia. The Native Affairs branch in Darwin listened in."

(*e*) "Leo Hickey's boat comes quickly to Snake Bay with a cargo of food from Darwin."

Another *Mikingula* chanted a lengthy song describing the making of a wooden canoe, the felling of a tree in the jungle, the length and shape of the craft and the final launching.

After these songs, the *kulama* men rested in the shade, and the initiates sat by the side of the *milimika*, until about sunset.

(10) *Taking the Cooked Yams to Water*

881 The *Mikingulas*, starting from equally spaced positions on the periphery, crawled toward the basket of cooked and sliced yams standing in the centre of the *milimika*, and pretended to fight over it. While this was going on, the women, beating sticks together, called out "Brr-brr", as did the owl-man, [535] *Purutjikini*, at the first *kulama*. Meanwhile two of the *Mikingulas* vigorously performed the crocodile dance (Pl. 302). Then with a loud cry, one of them picked up the basket containing the yams, and followed by most of the women and children, carried the basket to the water.

With long-drawn-out calls, and the sound "Brr-brr", the men tipped the cut-up yams from the basket on to a grass bed on the bottom of the stream. While the leader patted the surface of the water, the rest of the people called in a high trilling note, similar to the mosquito call of the *pukamuni* ceremony, [821] ending up in a loud *yoi*. These calls, they said, would cause still more thunder storms and heavy rain.

533 881 It was quite dark (about 7.30 p.m.) when the *kulama* people assembled to hear the *Mikinatrina* initiates sing for the first time. For, at this stage of the ceremony, each male initiate of the *Mikinatrina* grade was invited by the

Mikingulas to enter the *milimika* and chant his first song, known as the 533
Ai-ipa, which he had been practising for some time.[39] The female initiates, 881
the *Mikinatriningas* assisted the *Mikinatrinas* by beating the time on the outside of the *milimika* in the same way as *Pinaama*, the owl-woman, assisted her husband, *Purutjikini*, at the first *kulama* ceremony during creation times.

One *Mikingula* told me that when he was passing through the *Mikinatrina* grade of initiation, he chanted three songs; one was about a fish, one about a rifle and a third about a crocodile.

When the *Mikinatrina* initiates had finished their songs, the men of the higher initiation grades, the *Mikintaras*, *Mikiatarimas* and the fully initiated *Mikingulas*, entered the ring, one by one, and walking anti-clockwise chanted the following songs:[40] 177

(*a*) "A big ship brings many things to Darwin." 533

(*b*) "A Japanese plane was flying low over Melville Island. The men on 539
the ground said 'stand-by' and shot it down with a cannon."

(*c*) "In Darwin, I saw a kite, on a long string, which flew into the sky." 881

(*d*) "The Government plane flew me to Brisbane to see the Queen. It flew through the clouds. I went into the pilot's room in the front of the plane and the wireless told them Brisbane was only seven miles away."

(11) *The Kararitjui Songs*

About nine o'clock, the character of the songs changed and all but one 533
dealt with the spirit, *imunka*, of their children.[41] These songs are called 539
kararitjui imunka. 881

(*a*) "The spirits of my children have gone to Karslake Island (Wul- [774]
rungku), and are playing there."

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[39] At the conclusion of the *kulama* ceremony, both the male and female *Mikinatrina* initiates wear their ornaments and keep themselves decorated for a month, and every evening when seated in the camp, they chant the same *Ai-ipa* songs as they did at the *kulama* ceremony.

At the end of a month, the initiates wash the paint from their bodies, discard their ceremonial ornaments, and resume a normal life until the next *kulama*.

Two years later, the *Mikinatrina* becomes a *Mikintara* retaining that grade for another year, when he enters the grade of a *Mikiatarima*. On the following year, the initiate reaches the full status of a *Mikingula*.

During the last two stages, i.e., *Mikintara* and *Mikiatarima*, the initiates are not subject to any special restrictions nor do they have to pass through any special rituals. Their body decorations too, are similar to those of the fully initiated men.

[40] The men did not carry their throwing stick in the same manner as they did in the afternoon performance (Pl. 44A).

[41] The Melville Islanders in common with most aboriginal tribes, believe that their spirit (*imunka*) leaves the body during sleep and wanders around. The songs refer to the spirits of their children, who, during the hours of sleeping, play in the forest and on the sea-shore.

533 (*b*) "The spirits of my children are dancing on a sand-bank beside the sea."

539 (*c*) "My children's spirits are paddling about in a canoe, looking for fish
881 and turtle eggs."

Another man first chanted a secular song, which he had tried to do earlier, but had forgotten the tune.

[177] (*d*) "I saw a tractor pulling big trees out of the ground to make the new aerodrome."

Then he continued with his *Kararitjui* song.

(*e*) "My little children have gone to the island, but they must come back because they are short of tobacco." After a pause he continued, "They're back because someone has just taken the tobacco out of my hand."

(12) *The Ceremonial Eating of the Kulama Yam*

881 On the third day, at early dawn, everybody went to the swamp to eat some of the prepared yams. The leader quietly plucked a bunch of grass from the edge of the water "to waken the *kulama* yam", for should it get a fright the yam would cause much sickness in the camp.

The fully initiated men, the *Mikingulas*, ate the first few pieces "to tame the yam", after which everyone took some to eat. This ritual ensures for all the participants, good health until the next *kulama*. Some of the prepared yam is left in the water for others to eat should they desire it.

This ritual completed the *kulama* ceremony. Everyone returned to his camp, and, except for the initiates of the lower grades, pursued a normal life. The grass ring and the pieces of antbed were left in place but the *kulama* ground and the *milimika* were deserted (Pl. 45D).

784 There are, however, a number of taboos and restrictions associated with
881 the deserted *kulama* ground and oven. For instance, should anyone make
[778] his camp or light a fire in the deserted *milimika*, the spirit of the *kulama* yam would be offended and blind the culprit.

If anyone were so foolish as to toss a piece of the antbed, from the oven, sand from the *milimika* or a fragment of cooked *kulama* yam into the sea, *Maratji*, the rainbow, would be angry and create heavy seas and storms.
[821] The aborigines of the Cape Fourcroy area were convinced that a recent hurricane, which devastated the whole area, was caused by some foolish person throwing a piece of *kulama* into the sea.

On the other hand, if a *kulama* man takes a piece of antbed from the oven,
[224] and throwing it at a tree, hits the mark, his hunting will be successful, until the next *kulama* ceremony. But, if he misses his mark, his hunting will be poor.

Three bark paintings relate to the *kulama* ceremony, i.e., Pl. 43A, B, Pl. 43C and Pl. 43D.

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Pl. 43A, B, illustrates the ornaments used in a *kulama* ceremony.

Designs *a*, *a*, are two goose-feather balls, *sokwiongar* (Pl. 31B); *b*, *b*, etc., bark armlets, *tonguais*; *c*, unidentified; *d*, a throwing stick, *murugana* (Pl. 32D); *e*, cane arm rings, *jairinas* (Pl. 31H); *f*, bark basket, *wanatuna*; *g*, false beard, *baladi* (Pl. 31C), and *h*, a ceremonial belt, *ularimi*.

Pl. 43C illustrates the ceremonial circle, the oven and the performers of a *kulama* ceremony.

The central dotted circle is the oven (Pl. 46C), in which the yams are cooked, and the outer white oval, the mound of earth which surrounds the *milimika*. The ovals, *a*, *a*, etc., indicate the *Murukumuni*; *b*, *b*, etc., the *Wadjeniati*; *c*, the *Mikinatrina* initiates, and *d*, the fully initiated *Mikinguiss*.

Pl. 43D is a bark painting showing baskets of prepared cycad fruit leaning against a log (p. 129). The horizontal panel is the log, and the rectangles on either side, the baskets of food leaning against it.

CHAPTER V

The Spirit People of the Tiwi

776 775 The Tiwi believe that a number of spirit people live on the land, in the swamps, the sea and the sky of their tribal country. They are: the *mopaditis* (p. 61), the spirits of the dead whose homes are in the various totemic localities; the *Ningaunis* (p. 124) of the mangrove swamps of south-western Bathurst Island; the *Maratjis*, or rainbow people, living in the swamps; the *Pitapituis*, or spirit children, who later become aboriginal children; the sea-dogs, *Wauluis*, of the shallow sandbars of the sea; the *Papinjuwaris*, the meteor-men, who live in a place in the sky, far away to the west, and the *Peramennas*, who often befriend the aborigines.

Although the aborigines are afraid of the *Papinjuwaris*, the *Maratjis* and, to some extent, the *Mopaditis*, they do not particularly fear the other spirit people.

000 The aborigines of Oenpelli, western Arnhem Land, however, believe that their countryside is inhabited with a multitude of spirit people (Mountford, 1956, p. 181), some dangerous and some harmless. This is unusual in aboriginal Australia, most tribes fearing only the spirits of the dead.

1. THE METEOR-MEN, THE PAPINJUWARIS

776 The *Papinjuwaris* live, with their wives and children, in a large paper-bark hut at Wangidji, a place far away to the west, where the sky ends.

The men, large and heavily built, have only one eye as bright as a star. The aborigines often see a *Papinjuwari* streaking across the sky, a blazing firestick in one hand and a fighting club in the other.

The *Papinjuwaris* are ghoulish people, who, although their food consists of bandicoots and large centipedes (Fig. 12), are always craving for the bodies of the dead and the blood of the sick to satisfy their degraded appetites.

[821] One evening, the aborigines pointed out a brilliant meteor which they said was a *Papinjuwari*; he was taking the body of *Waniamperi*, whose grave was not far from our camp, back to his companions at Wangidji.

753 776 When a *Papinjuwari* hunts for blood, he locates a sick person (by smell), and standing some distance away (they can make themselves invisible) sucks

[p.144A]

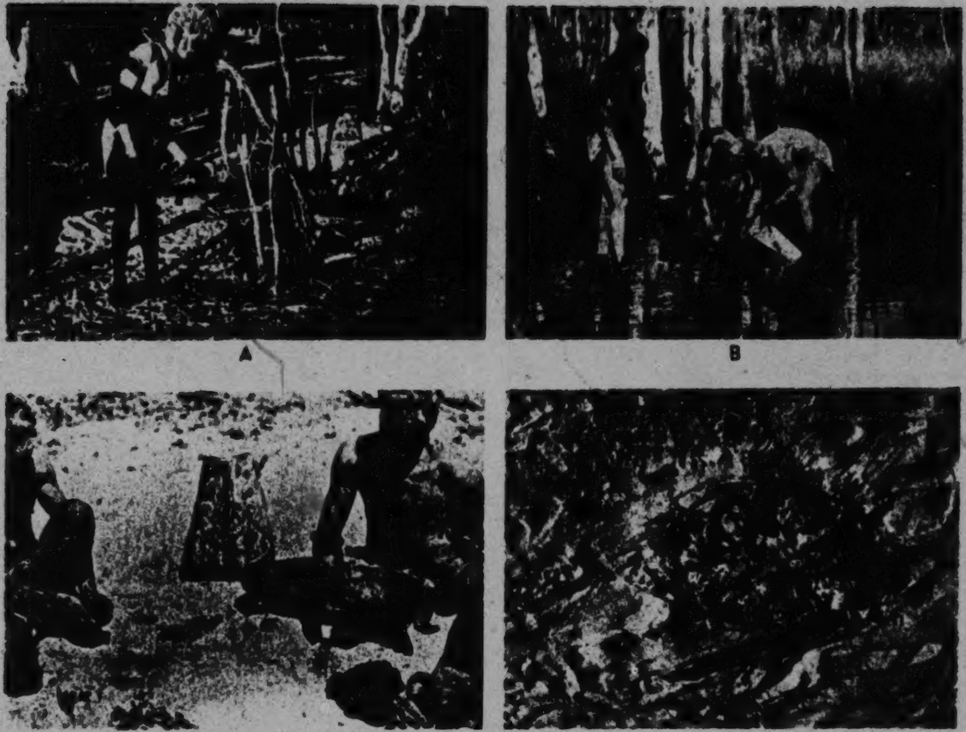

PLATE 45. *The Kulama Ceremony*
A, Building the Kulama Fire; B, Placing the Kulama Yams in Water; C, Pressing Heated Sand against Joints; D, Deserted Kulama Oven.

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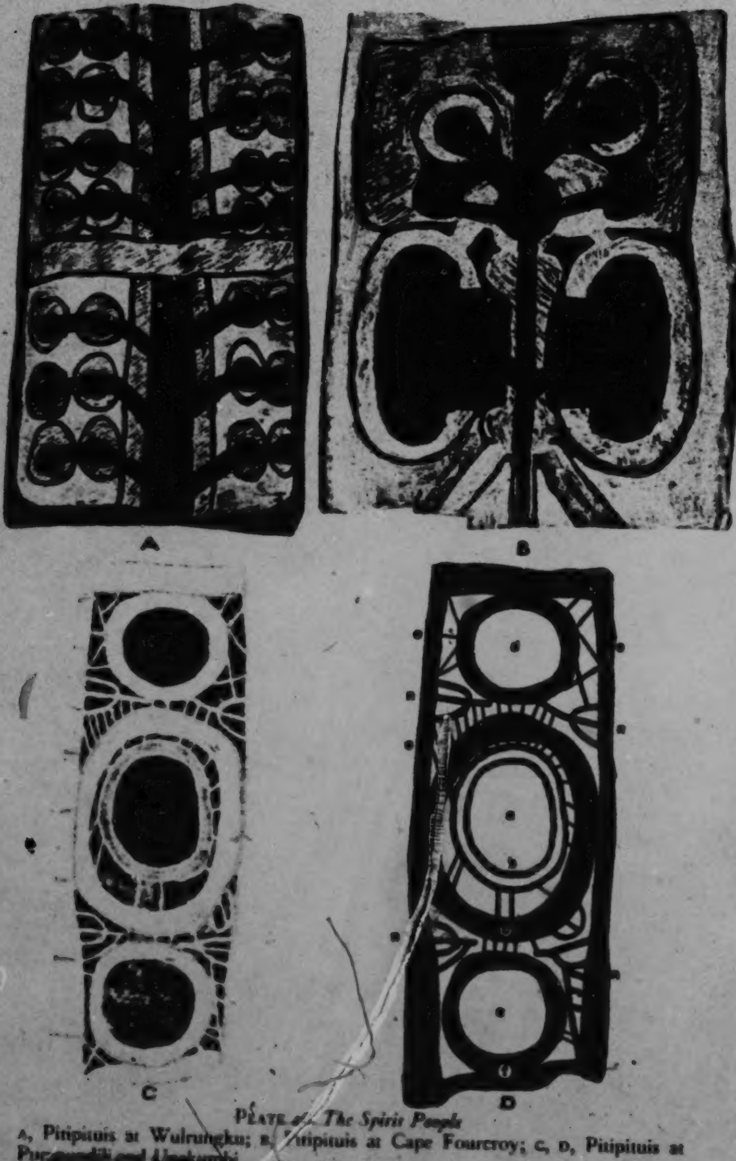

PLATE [illegible]. *The Spirit People*

A, Pitipituis at Wulrungku; B, Pitipituis at Cape Fourcroy; C, D, Pitipituis at [illegible] and [illegible].

[p. 144 B]

blood from the arm of the victim, yet leaves no wound. As the sick person 753
becomes weaker, the *Papinjuwari*, making himself sufficiently small, enters 776
the body through the mouth, and, by drinking up the rest of the blood, kills
the victim.

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[532x]

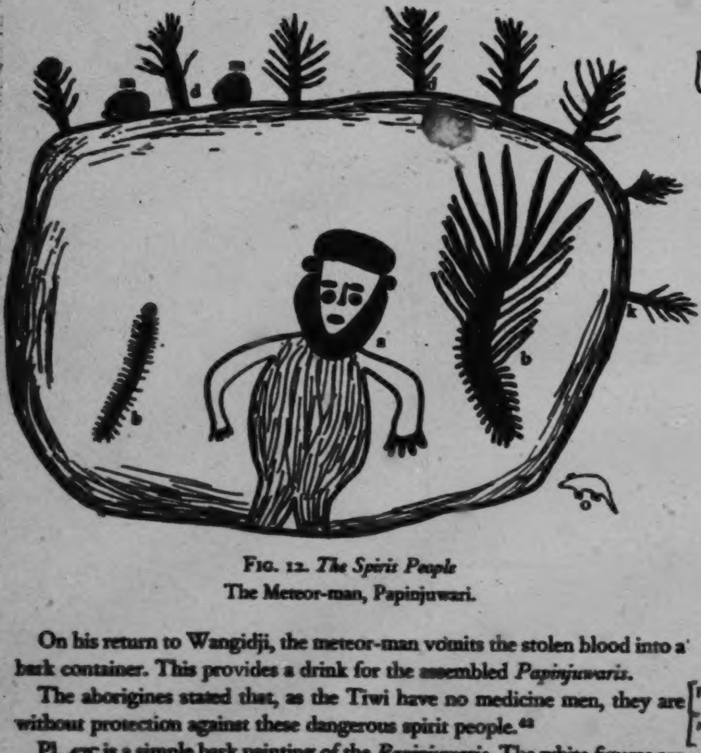

FIG. 12. *The Spirit People*
The Meteor-man, Papinjuwari.

On his return to Wangidji, the meteor-man vomits the stolen blood into a bark container. This provides a drink for the assembled *Papinjuwaris*.

The aborigines stated that, as the Tiwi have no medicine men, they are [751]
without protection against these dangerous spirit people.[42] [756]

Pl. 47c is a simple bark painting of the *Papinjuwaris*. The white figures are
the ghoulish sky-people, the crescents are moons, and the circles, stars. 532x

Fig. 12 is the copy of a crayon drawing showing a *Papinjuwari*, *a*, inside 776
of his paper-bark hut at Wangidji. On either side of him at *b*, *b*, are the large

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[42] Spencer, 1928, p. 671, refers to a song chanted in a *Kulama* ceremony which is [114]
supposed to protect the initiates from an evil spirit, the shooting star, *Mabinua* (almost certain to be my *Papinjuwari*); Harney and Elkin, 1942, p. 282, who call the meteor man, Papinowari, or Lamparapari, state that, if a piece of dried blood of a person is burnt, the smell will attract the meteor-man.

532^x 776 centipedes, *plarisa*, and on the lower right at *o* is a bandicoot. These are the main foods of the *Papinjuwaris*. The outer oval is a line of rocks which surround the home of the *Papinjuwari*; *m*, *m*, are piles of boulders, and designs, *d*, *d*, etc., beach kapok trees, *tjingunia*. This *Papinjuwari* is shown with two eyes, although in the mythical story the *Papinjuwaris* have only one.

2. THE SPIRIT CHILDREN, THE PITIPITUIS

776 The *Pitipituis* are small dark-skinned people who have always existed, even in early creation times, although the aborigines cannot explain their origin. The adults are about nine and the children two to three inches high. They live either on outlying islands, in patches of dense jungle near the seashore, or in those of the freshwater swamps. The *Pitipitui* centres are scattered somewhat evenly around the two islands (Fig. 1); they are:

(1) Kaiadju, on the Baxendale reef, a few miles from Murupianga, S.E. Melville Island. In this locality, the *Pitipituis* have made their home among the trees of a mangrove swamp.

[824] (2) Miadibiniadu, near Wailu, N.E. Melville Island, where the *Pitipituis* live among the dense groves of pandanus palms that grow on the edge of the freshwater lagoon. When the aborigines see the pandanus leaves scattered about, they believe that the *Pitipituis*, in their play, have been throwing them at one another.

(3) Pumaduba, near Pirilou, on the Goose Creek swamps, N. Melville Island. In this locality the *Pitipituis* live among the blossoms and leaves of the water-lilies.

(4) Wulrungku (Karsiake Island), N.W. Melville Island. Some *Pitipituis* camp in the jungles along the shore of Wulrungku, and others on the bed of the nearby ocean.

(5) Purapundili, a sandy island off Cape Van Diemen, N.W. Melville Island. During the heat of the day they shelter in the jungles of Cape Van Diemen.

(6) Tiatri-inga, a long beach at Murroo Point (south of Mandumbi), N.W. Bathurst Island. Like the *Pitipituis* at Wailu, those at Tiatri-inga live in the thick clumps of pandanus palms. At Mandumbi, near the mouth of Putawini Creek, a group of *Pitipituis* have made their home in a dense jungle.

(7) Jambutu and Juruna, at the head-waters of Port Hurd, S.W. Bathurst Island. Those at Jambutu live among the mangroves and those at Juruna, in the jungle.

(8) Jamputurai and Jurilupa, near Cape Fourcroy. The *Pitipituis* in the

former locality make their camp in a dense jungle, and at the latter, in the 776 forest near the sea-coast. At one time, these *Pitipituis* lived at Juruna, but left after a while and established these camps at Jurilupa and Jampanural.

(9) Unalumbi (Buchanan Island). Here, the home of the *Pitipituis* is on a sandbank on the southern side of the island. When the tide is low, the little people play on the sandbank, but when it is high, they go to their underground homes, where it is warm and dry.

During the early creation (*palaneri*) times, *Purukupali* visited one or 773 another of the homes of the *Pitipituis* in a bark canoe, brought back some of 776 the little people and gave them to his sisters, *Wuriupranala* and *Murupiangkala* so that they could have children. In a later period, *Purukupali* gave the *Pitipituis* to his wife, *Bima*, who in turn presented them to their future mothers.

Before *Purukupali* drowned himself, after the death of his son, *Djinini*, he told the *Pitipituis* that they must find their own mothers. Now, should one 776 of these little people wish to become a human being, it travels to a native 842 camp, and giving her name, asks one of the married men (when he is asleep) 787 where its future mother is camping. After the father has indicated the particular wife, the little sprite waits a suitable opportunity to enter her vulva and start life as a human being.

The aborigines believe implicitly in the *Pitipituis* and the mystical origin of their children; several of them gave me details of how their children came to them in dreams.

Old *Tjamalampua* told of the time when, while he was asleep, the *mopaditi* of his dead father brought him a spirit child, and sat it on his knee saying, "This is your daughter." *Tjamalampua* directed the little *Pitipitui* to one of his wives, who later became its mother.

Muramajua described how his three children came to him.

(1) A boy, now dead, came from a Japanese plane[48] and asked for his wife [177] as a mother. Later she felt the movements of the child.

(2) A little girl came to him in a dream and spat at him. His wife conceived soon afterwards.

(3) His last girl hit him on the head whilst he was asleep, and, in his fright, he slapped her face. It was not long afterwards that his wife became pregnant.

Those accounts indicate that although, ideally, the child comes to the father and asks for the mother, in actual practice they visit the father under a number of conditions.

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[48] This aboriginal had worked with the Australian Navy during the war; an example of acculturation.

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Three bark paintings and a crayon drawing illustrate the beliefs of the Tiwi concerning the *Pitipituis*.

The upper part of Pl. 46c, D, deals with the *Pitipituis* at Purapundili, a low sandy island north-west of Cape Van Diemen, N.W. Melville Island, and the lower part with those at Unakumbi, on Buchanan Island.

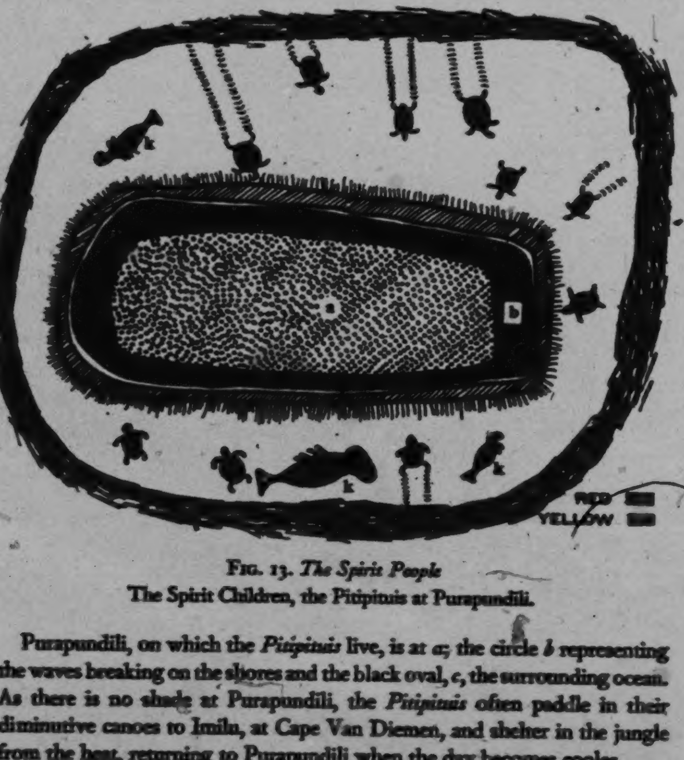

FIG. 13. *The Spirit People*
The Spirit Children, the Pitipituis at Purapundili.

Purapundili, on which the *Pitipituis* live, is at *a*; the circle *b* representing the waves breaking on the shores and the black oval, *c*, the surrounding ocean. As there is no shade at Purapundili, the *Pitipituis* often paddle in their diminutive canoes to Imilu, at Cape Van Diemen, and shelter in the jungle from the heat, returning to Purapundili when the day becomes cooler.

Malumerinisa said that when the aborigines visited this island to collect sea-gull eggs, they often saw the *Pitipituis* at a distance, but if they, the aborigines, approached too closely, the little people disappeared.

Buchanan Island (Jurubulinai), another *Pitipitui* centre, is at *e*, the black circle *f*, indicating the waves breaking on the shore. Pandanus trees on

Jurubulinal are indicated at *n*, *n*, etc.; the short lines, as at *o*, *o*, etc., throughout the painting are the drifwood logs cast up on the beaches.

Fig. 13 is the copy of a crayon drawing again depicting *Pitipituis* on the sandy island of Purapundili.

The central rectangle, *a*, represents the grassy surfaces of the island, which are favourite nesting places of the sea-birds, and the black areas, *b*, the sticks and debris above the high tide mark. The outer shaded rectangle is the sandy shore, while the many short lines on its edge are the little *Pitipituis* of the island.

Dugongs are indicated at *k*, *k*, the other designs being female turtles coming on shore to lay their eggs. The tracks they make in the sand are indicated on six of the turtles. The outer oval symbolizes the open sea.

Pl. 46B pictures the two camps of the *Pitipituis* near Cape Fourcroy, S.W. Bathurst Island. One camp, called Jampaturai, is in the forest on the sea coast, and another Jurilupa, in a dense jungle further inland. During the daytime, the *Pitipituis* from both localities hunt together in the forest and the jungle for food, but at night each group sleeps in its own camp.

The lower designs are the camps of the *Pitipituis* in the jungle at Jurilupa, and the upper designs, the camps of those at Jampaturai. The white ovals and the circles, represent the large leaves of the *dioni* yam which provide a shelter for the little people. The roads by which the *Pitipituis* travel from Juruna to their respective camps are indicated, and the open country near their camps is the plain ground.

Pl. 46A pictures the *Pitipituis* at Wulrungku (Karslake Island) and the *Bilawuwi*[44] who live at Milika, a group of rocks on the sea-bottom to the north of Wulrungku.

According to the aborigines, the *Pitipituis*, and the *Bilawuwis* are the same type of people, only some, i.e. the *Bilawuwis*, live under the water, and others, the *Pitipituis*, on the dry land, the jungles, and the pandanus swamps of Wulrungku.

The *Bilawuwis* and *Pitipituis* who often visit each other's camps, hunt the same foods as the aborigines but, having no fire, they must eat their foods raw.

The upper part of Pl. 46A pictures the homes of the *Bilawuwis* under the water, and the lower, the *Pitipituis* on Wulrungku.

The central vertical black panel on the upper section is the main track of the *Bilawuwis* and the branching lines, the paths leading to their many camps. The encircling white rings are the red rocks among which they live;

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[44] Harney and Elkin, 1943, p. 231, refers to the home of the spirit children as Bilawuwi.

532 the background is the sea. The white central transverse panel is the beach at Wulrungku.

776 The meaning of the designs on the lower panel are similar, the black central and branching lines representing the tracks made by the *Pitipituis* as they travel to and from their camps (the black discs); the encircling lines represent the sand around those camps, and the painted background, the jungle which shelters the little people.

3. THE PARAMANUAS[44]

776 The *Paramanuas* are short, particularly active, agile men, about three feet high, with thick, powerful limbs, tusk-like teeth, and projecting toe and finger nails.

In general, except for these details, they resemble the aborigines in appearance, eat the same foods and follow a similar way of life.

They live in many places throughout Melville and Bathurst Islands, but no one except those captured by the *Paramanuas*, has seen either them or [753] their homes. As they dislike being talked about, and often make those people [124] ill who do so, I found it somewhat difficult to gather information about the *Paramanuas*.

The homes of the *Paramanuas*, their wives and their children, are spacious underground caves, the entrances to which are openings either in the side of termite mounds, or hollow trees. In these caves, the man store their utensils, [343] weapons and food (Fig. 14). Their cooking fire, like that of the aborigines, is always outside of their camp.

Occasionally a *Paramanua*, wishing to befriend an aboriginal, will watch 776 him for some time. Then one day when the aboriginal is hunting by himself, 787 the *Paramanua* will cast a spear at him. But, before the spear has reached its mark, the *Paramanua* will have caught it and, standing at the back of the aboriginal, will be tickling his ribs. The aboriginal, thoroughly scared, turns to strike his opponent, only to find him again at his back. This game goes on until the aboriginal is exhausted, dizzy and confused. Then hitting him on the side of the head with an open hand, rendering the aboriginal unconscious, the spirit man picks up the prostrate man and carries him to the underground home of the *Paramanuas*.

Awaking to find himself in a dark place, the aboriginal is terrified, but on receiving plenty of food from the *Paramanuas*, and treated with every kindness, the aboriginal loses all fear, and as the weeks go by, all sense of time.

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[44] Harney and Elkin, 1942, p. 252, refer to these little people as Bremiauar.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
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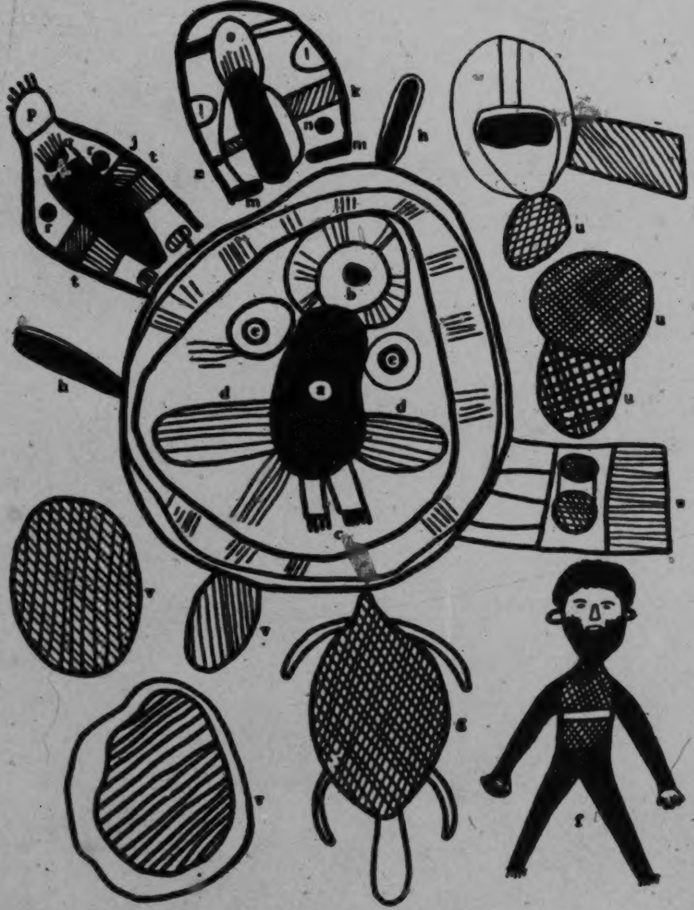
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Fig. 14. *The Spirit People*
A [illegible] Man and his Family.

776 787 After many weeks, the *Paramanua* takes the aboriginal to a forest close to his old camp and releases him, saying, "You're lucky to have been caught by a *Paramanua*. From now onward, if you don't tell anyone about me, and the things you have seen, I'll be your friend. I'll protect you in a fight; I'll chase game toward you so that you'll be known as a good hunter, and because I can see into the future, I'll make sure that you do not get into serious trouble."

To this, the aboriginal always agrees; but should he divulge the source of his good luck, his *Paramanua* guardian, who is always nearby, will either kill the aboriginal for his breach of faith or withdraw his protection.

532 Fig. 14 and Fig. 15, are copies of two crayon drawings of the *Paramanuas*, one (Fig. 15) being the work of a younger sophisticated aboriginal.

776 Fig. 14 deals with a *Paramanua* and his family at home in a termite mound. The central figure, *a*, is a conventionalized representation of a *Paramanua*. His face and head are at *b*, the radiating lines within the two circles indicating his hair. His feet are at *c*, and shoulder blades at *h*, *h*. I did not gather the interpretation of symbols *d*, *d*, but they may be his arms. The outer concentric circles are the walls of the termite mound and discs, *e*, *e*, the entrances to the *Paramanua's* home.

The *Paramanua* is shown again at *f*, in a more naturalistic form, the line across the fingers of the left hand indicating his long finger-nails. The interpretation of design *g*, was somewhat confused, some informants saying that it was a *Paramanua* woman, others that it was a turtle caught for food.

In the upper left is the son, *j*, and the daughter, *k*, of the *Paramanuas*. In these drawings the various parts of the body are separated[44] and have no relation to normal position or appearance.

The head of the son is at *p*, the upper radiating lines being his hair; *q*, is his mouth, the upper lines symbolizing the teeth; *r*, *r*, are two goose-feather balls, and *s*, *s*, his feet. The lines *t*, *t*, indicate his ribs.

On the right is the *Paramanua's* daughter. Her eyes are at *n*, *n*; her eyebrows at *m*, *m*; breasts at *l*, *l*, and her feet at *o*. The chevrons on either side of her body indicate her ribs. The cooking hearths of the *Paramanua* are at *v*, *v*, *v*; piles of rocks at *u*, *u*, *u*; and a jungle is at *w*.

In the middle of Fig. 15 is a *Paramanua* with a goose-feather ball, *tokwionga*, *b*, around his neck, and on the lower right at *a*, his camp in the middle of a large anthill. Within the camp are many foods and weapons; *c*,

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[170] [44] The separation of the parts of the body is not unusual in aboriginal art, Mountford, 1937, Fig. 2, illustrates a crayon drawing of the Ngadadjara tribe of the western Australian deserts, where these characteristics are present.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

x 532 776 is a seagoing turtle; *d*, a snake; *e*, a bandicoot; *f*, a lizard; *j*, a bark basket; *k*, a palm leaf (*tulini*) basket; *l*, a female, and *m*, a male *pukamani* spear; and *n*, a multi-pronged fish spear. Another fish spear is at *p*, and a female *pukamani* spear at *o*. At *r*, is a large-leafed climbing vine which provides a shade over the home of the *Paramanas* and *q* is a eucalyptus tree.

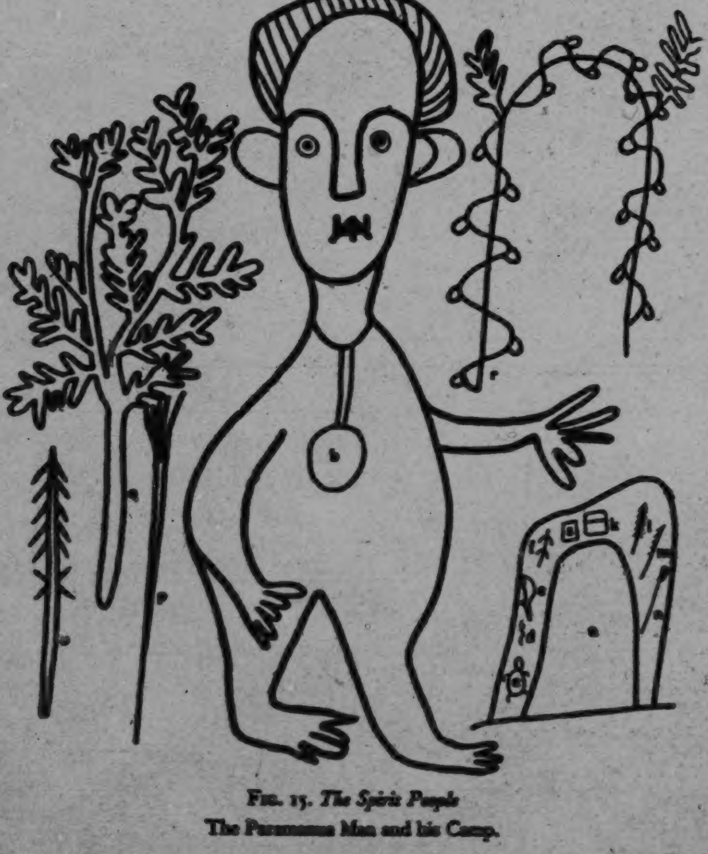

FIG. 15. *The Spirit People*
The Paramanas Man and his Camp.

4. THE SEA-DOGS, THE WANKUIS

773 A fragment of a myth tells of how, at the close of the creation period, a mythical man, called *Kirinua*, assembled all the dogs and asked them whether they would prefer to live on the land or in the sea. The present-day dingoes, the *Kirijunas*, chose the land, and others, the sea-dogs, *Wankuis*, the sandbanks in the sea.

776 The home of one group of the sea-dogs is a long sand-bar on the eastern side of the entrance to Snake Bay, about a mile from the expedition camp, over which, except at the spring tides, the waves break continuously. [823] The aborigines look on the breaking waves as the wagging tails of the *Wankuis*.

When the tide is out in the day-time and the sandbank exposed and dry, the sea-dogs, to escape being seen go to their camps under the sand.

When it is dark, the *Wankuis* leave their watery home, come on shore and make their camps in low caves at the base of a cliff at Snake Bay (Pl. 47E). While there, the *Wankuis* capture the sea-foods of the shallow waters, sting-rays, shell-fish and crabs. The aborigines claim that on the still nights they often hear the *Wankuis* barking.

In the shallow waters of a sandbar near Cape Fourcroy, the aborigines frequently see another kind of *Wankui* which walks on three legs, waving the fourth in the air.

×532 776 Pl. 47D pictures the *Wankuis* at the sandbar in Snake Bay. In the centre, with many teats, is the mother surrounded by her twelve sons. It is significant that there was no mention of the father.

5. THE RAINBOW, MARATJI

171 776 [821] A belief in a mythical serpent-like creature, which is associated with, or is, the rainbow, and is dangerous to strangers, but not to the local inhabitants, occupies an important place, not only in the mythology of the Australian aborigines, but in the mythologies of people in many parts of the world. These mythical creatures are usually highly-coloured (like the rainbow), of huge size and have both mane and beard.

I have traced these mythical creatures, in their various forms, from the River Murray in South Australia, through Central Australia to Arnhem Land. In the western deserts of Central Australia, Mountford, 1948, p. 138, writes, "The snake (*wonambi*) is a huge, many-coloured creature with a [778] mane and a beard. It is feared . . . because it attacks all strangers who approach

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[p.154 A]

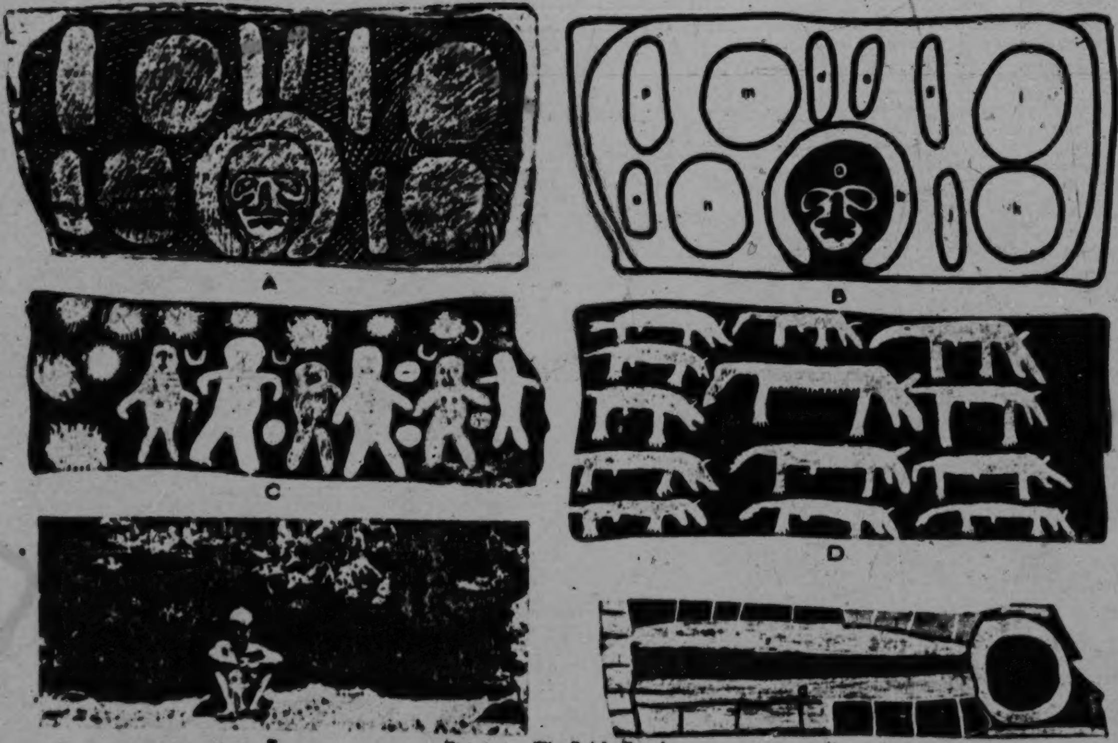

PLATE 47. *The Spirit People*
A, B, Spirits of the Dead, Mopaditis; C, F, Meteor-men, Papinjuwaris; D, Sea-dogs, Wankuis; E, Caves, Homes of Wankuis.

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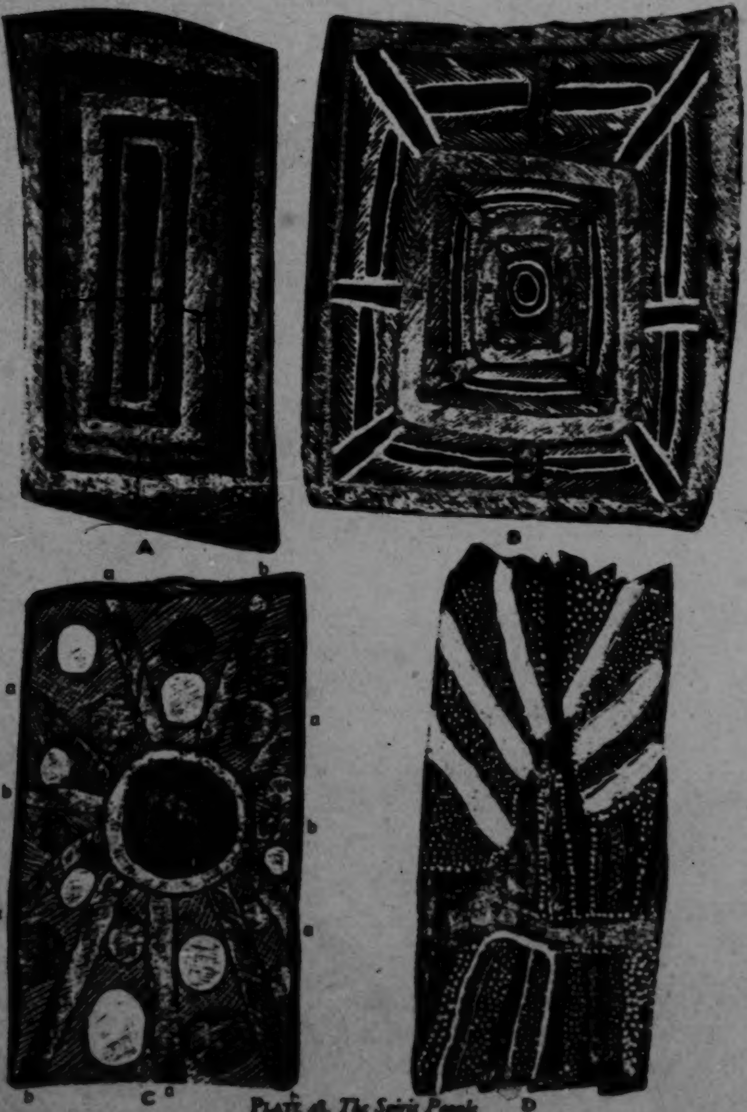
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PLATE 48. *The Spirit People*

A, B, The Rainbow-spirit, Maraiji, at Kulimbini; C, Maraiji at Mounda; D, Maraiji, at Goose Creek.

[p. 154 B]

the water in which it lives, usually calling with a deep booming note. The 171
rainbow serpent . . . is related . . . to water, rainbow . . ." The rainbow- 776
serpent myth is widespread throughout Arnhem Land. At Oenpelli (Mount- 778
ford, 1956, p. 210), "mythical serpents live in deep waterholes. . . . The aborigines are . . . afraid of these mythical creatures for should anyone interfere with their . . . home, the serpents, particularly *Ngalmit*, will make their waterholes overflow and drown everyone. The rainbow-serpent woman, *Narama*, of the Liverpool River area . . . destroys all aborigines who approach her home."

In north-eastern Arnhem Land (Mountford, 1956, p. 462; Warner, 1937, p. 541) the rainbow-serpents live, in one form or another in most of the important water-holes; they are associated with water, the rainbow, lightning, and thunder. Again these serpents are usually highly coloured (like the rainbow), and have a mane and beard. The aborigines claim that they are dangerous to all strangers who approach their waterholes, and even to local aborigines who do not perform the proper rituals before drinking. On Groote Eylandt (Mountford, 1956, p. 75), however, it is a lizard, the gekko, *Ipilja-ipilja*, which takes the place of the rainbow-serpent. It is highly coloured, about one hundred feet in length, has long hair on its head and whiskers on its lower jaw. It lives in a swamp, called Numarika, on south-western Groote Eylandt. Should anyone drink from this swamp, they will surely die. *Ipilja-ipilja* is associated with thunder, thunderstorms, and rain, but not, as far as I could ascertain, with the rainbow.

The lizard-like *Maraŋjis* of Melville and Bathurst Islands[47] have many of 776
the characteristics of the gekko, *Ipilja-ipilja* of Groote Eylandt[48] as well as [171]
the rainbow serpents of the Central Australian deserts, and Oenpelli, in Arnhem Land.

The *Maraŋjis* are highly coloured lizards, the males being up to one hundred yards in length, with horns on their heads instead of hair, and long projecting jaws in the place of beards.

Should any unauthorised person interfere with their waterholes, the
Maraŋjis become annoyed. They roar loudly, make the water bubble up [821]
(like the Oenpelli serpent, Mountford, 1956, p. 210), and send a waterspout into the air which, falling as torrential rain, floods the countryside. One of the *Maraŋjis* then changes himself into the rainbow and travels across the land seeking to injure the offender or anyone else in its path.

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[47] Harney and Elkin, 1949, p. 231, refers to *Maraŋji* as the rainbow snake.

[48] It is of interest to note that on isolated places, such as Groote Eylandt and Melville Island, these mythical creatures resemble lizards, and on the Australian mainland, and in most other places in the world, they take the form of snakes.

776 The *Maratjis* belong to the totem of *Andjalui* (fresh water), in common with *Pakadringa* (thunderstorms), *Tomituka* (monsoon rain) and *Bumerali* (lightning). They are mortal creatures who die and disintegrate like everything else (Pl. 48D).

[123] I collected bark paintings and crayon drawings of a number of *Maratjis*, living with their wives and families in three lagoons on Melville and Bathurst Islands, i.e., Maundu, southern Bathurst Island, and Kulimbini, northwestern, and Maratjiana, northern Melville Island.

The *Maratjis* of Melville and Bathurst Islands are not always of the same
776 temperament. For instance, the *Maratjis* who live at Kulimbini (Pl. 48A)
778 are so dangerous that should any aboriginal dare approach their water, they
will steal his *imunka* (spirit), and he will die.

Although the *Maratjis* of Maundu (Pl. 48C) are feared, it is possible, if certain rituals are performed, for even a stranger to drink the water without harm; while those who live in the Maratjiana lagoon at Goose Creek, are looked upon by the aborigines as "properly quiet fellow".[49]

The rainbow, as a *Maratji*, however, is universally feared, the aborigines
776 believing that the primary bow is the *imunka* (spirit) of a male, and the secon-
821 dary bow, that of a female *Maratji*.

If a rainbow goes too near an aboriginal camp, the occupants will quickly
[789] build up their fire[50] and call out to frighten *Maratji* away, but should he come
too close, the people will feel ill and break out into a cold perspiration. If an
aboriginal is overtaken by a rainbow,[51] it will kill him by taking his spirit.

Should some aboriginal be so foolish as to throw a spear at a rainbow and injure it, the *Maratjis* would destroy the whole country and the people who live in it.

Two heavy wind-storms, which occurred whilst the expedition was at
776 Melville Island, were supposed to have been caused by angry *Maratjis*. The
821 first was due to some foolish aboriginal who broke a *kulama* ceremony taboo
648 (p. 142) by throwing some of the termite mound from the *kulama* oven into
the sea. The second happened when a *pukamuni* pole, taken from a grave by
one of the senior officers of the Native Affairs Branch, was being loaded on a
boat for transport to Darwin.

The aborigines explained that as these poles are a gift from the living to

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[49] Further research will no doubt reveal other waterholes on Melville and Bathurst Islands, inhabited by *Maratjis*.

[171] [50] This would suggest that *Maratji*, like the *Wonambi* of the Central Australian deserts, is afraid of fire (Mountford, 1948, p. 138).

[51] These conditions are, of course, impossible because the rainbow is always several feet from the observer.

the dead, they should never be taken from him. *Maratji* was so angry over 776
this white man's act of sacrilege that he created a heavy storm to sink the boat 821
and so prevent the theft. 648

The Maratjis at Maundu

Maundu, a freshwater lagoon on the south-western shores of Bathurst 776
Island is the home of many *Maratjis*, males, females and children, under a 778
leader called *Orini*. The water which flows from the lagoon, across the beach
into the sea, is reddish in colour. This, according to the aborigines, is stained
by the faeces of the *Maratjis*.

The aborigines of the adjoining *Mandubuka* totem are the only people 751
safe from the attacks of the *Maratjis* of Maundu. To protect a stranger who 776
has to go near Maundu, one of the local men, wiping the perspiration from
his own armpits, rubs it over his companion. [827]

The familiar body odour misleads the *Maratjis*, who do not attack the
newcomer. Should this strange aboriginal have to cross the stream that flows
from Maundu to the sea, a local man first makes the water muddy, then,
walking through it instructs the stranger to step in his tracks. The stranger [437]
must recompense his guide for this protection. Should the stranger become
thirsty and none of the local men are with him, he can safely drink at Maundu
if he first makes the water muddy. At the *pukamuni* ceremony of *Waniamperi*
which we witnessed at Melville Island, an elderly aboriginal, *Jibunglialumi*, [753]
whose nose had been eaten away by yaws, attributed his deformity to the [164]
attack of a *Maratji* because he drank from the clear, not the muddy water, of
Maundu.

Even when a group of local aborigines has to pass the Maundu lagoon,
they travel in single file, the elder men first, the younger men next, then the
women and children, each adult placing his feet exactly in the footmarks of
the person in front. No woman, during the period of her menses, must go [841]
near Maundu. If she did, *Maratji* would kill her. There are good ochres of [784]
many colours at Maundu but no one will use them. Tradition tells of an
aboriginal, called *Alungun*, who lost his life because he disregarded this
taboo.

One side of a female *pukamuni* basket, Pl. 48c (indicated by the central 532 x
hole), deals with the myth of *Maratji* at Maundu. 778

The central hole in the basket is the freshwater lagoon, Maundu; the 776
radiating lines, *a*, *a*, etc., are the *Maratjis* and those at *b*, *b*, etc., strips of white
sand on the bottom of the lagoon. The darker circles indicate the red (stained)
water which runs from the lagoon, across the beach, into the sea, and the

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

K 532 lighter, the bubbles of water (supposed to be caused by the *Maratjis*), which
776 rise from the bottom of the lagoon. The cross-hatching represents a grass
[778] which grows on the shores of Maundu.

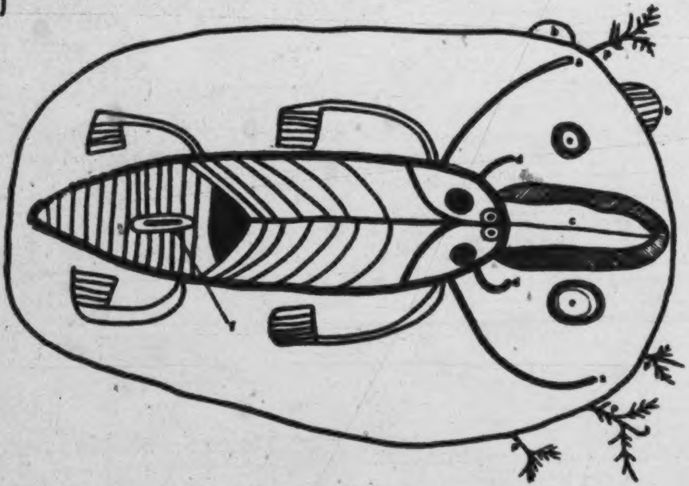

FIG. 16. *The Spirit People*
The Rainbow-spirit, Maratji.

Fig. 16, the copy of a crayon drawing of *Maratji*, was the work of a sophisticated aboriginal who had been employed for some years in Darwin. It shows a young female *Maratji*, a lizard-like creature measuring about fifty feet, with two long horns, *a, a*, and two short horns, *d, d*, projecting from her head. At *c*, are both her tongue and lower jaw; *f*, is her vulva, and circles *e, e*, show the bubbles of water which rise to the surface when she becomes annoyed.

K 532 The outer oval is the shore of Maundu, the designs, *p, p*, etc., are trees,
and *b, b*, piles of rocks on the shore.
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776

The Maratjis at Kulimbini

On Pl. 48A, the long central black rectangle is the body of a female *Maratji* at Kulimbini, north-western Melville Island. The six encircling rectangles are the colours of the *imunka* (spirit) of *Maratji*, i.e., the rainbow, and the dark-coloured spaces at the top and bottom of the design, the falling rain.

Pl. 48B does not deal with the myth, but the natural features of Kulim- 532x
bini lagoon, in which the *Maratjis* live. The central black dot symbolizes an 778
area of blue water-lilies in the lagoon, and the white circles, the surrounding
water. The diagonal lines, *b*, *b*, etc., indicate the Kulimbini creek, and the 776
rectangles, *a*, *a*, *a*, the broken water of the stream as it flows among the stones of its rocky bed. The short black panels and the two black rectangles indicate a grass with an edible bulb (probably the spike rush) that grows in the shallow water. The chevrons on the outer part of the design represent dead leaves lying on the grass, and those within the first and second inner rectangles, *a*, *a*, a red-coloured algae found along the edge of the still water.

The Maratjis at Maratjiana, Goose Creek

Pl. 54A pictures a large freshwater stream, called Maratjiani, on the northern end of the Goose Creek swamps.

The meandering lines on the right and left hand edge and the central vertical panel are freshwater creeks, and the outer vertical panels, two *Maratjis* who live in them. The short, transverse panels are rocks along the banks of the stream and the dots, dry land covered with grass.

Pl. 48D pictures the skeleton of a *Maratji*, which the artist claimed had died in a swamp to the north-east of Maratjiana. At present there are no remains, they have all disintegrated.

The bulk of the skeleton is at *a*, the backbone at *b*, the ribs are shown by the radiating lines at the top and the vertical panels at the bottom; the jaw is at *c*. The dotted background symbolizes the many-coloured skin of the dead *Maratji.*

CHAPTER VI

The Secular Bark Paintings

x532 The designs used by the Tiwi on many of their secular bark paintings are strongly influenced by those employed in decorating the poles and the large bark baskets of the *pukamuni* ceremony. For instance, all of the patterns on Pl. 49 would be similar to those used on a burial pole, while a number of the paintings of the totemic places, for example, those shown on Pl. 10, have the same fundamental designs as those on the *pukamuni* baskets.

As mentioned previously, one of the remarkable aspects of the art of the [171] Tiwi is that it is highly formalized, whereas, on the mainland, only fourteen miles away, across the dangerous waterway of Dundas Strait, the art is fully representational. This difference in the art forms of the Tiwi and that of the aborigines of the adjacent mainland is an excellent example of how a natural barrier can isolate one culture from the influence of another.

1. TOPOGRAPHY

x532 133 137 The obverse side of a large *pukamuni* basket (Pl. 49A, B), illustrates the trees and shrubs of Cape Van Diemen, arranged in a decorative pattern, and on the reverse side (Pl. 49C, D), the natural features at Imilu, in the same locality.

Cape Van Diemen

On Pl. 49A, B, the series of rectangles at *a*, on the top of the basket, represent a forest of stringybark trees, and the groups of vertical and sloping lines at *k*, *k* (bottom), many bloodwood trees. The vertical lines, *f*, *f*, etc., are also stringybarks and the horizontal lines, *c*, *c*, etc., bloodwood trees.

The many circles, *d*, *d*, etc., are *pukamuni* arm ornaments, *palmajinas* (Pl. 31E, F); the cross-hatching in rectangles *e*, *e*, etc. (upper) are spider webs, and the dots at *b*, *b*, etc., black and red seeds of a jungle vine lying on the ground.

Imilu

On Pl. 49C, D, the circles *a*, *a*, etc., in the border, represent the many hives of wild bees in the trees at Imilu, and the intervening panels, *f*, *f*, etc., red

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958

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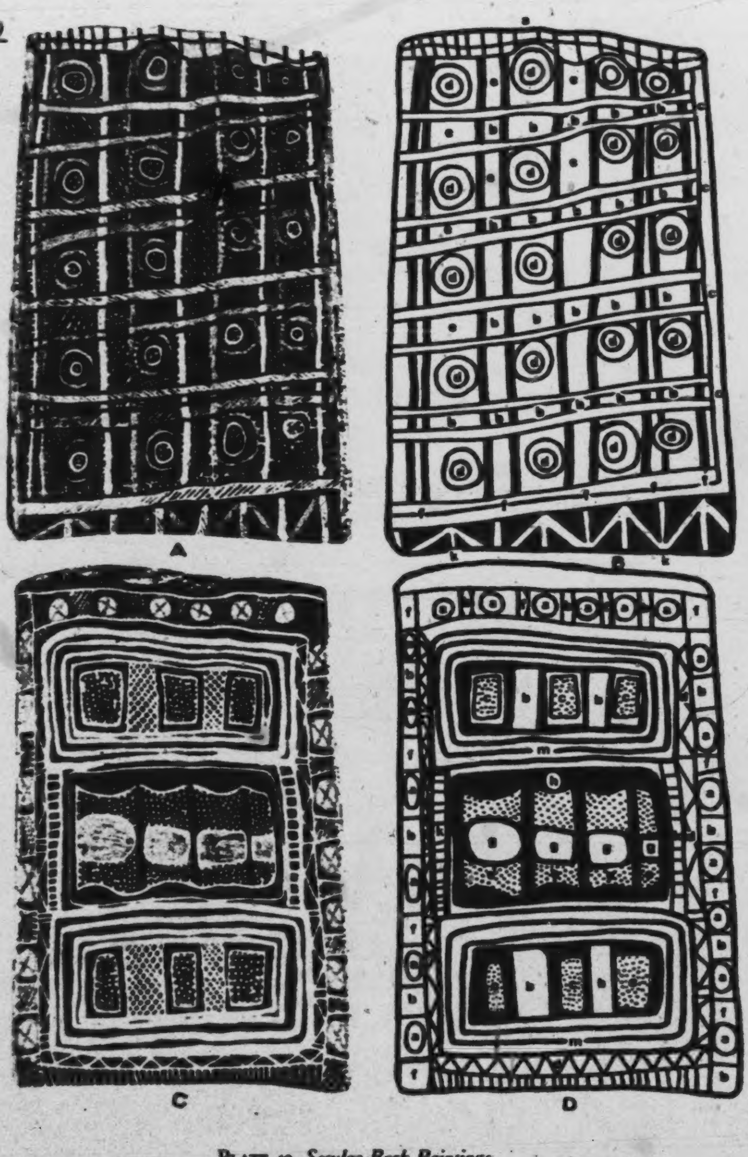

PLATE 49. *Secular Bark Paintings*
A, B, Topography, Cape Van Diemen; C, D, Topography, Imilu.

[p. 160 A]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958

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[302]

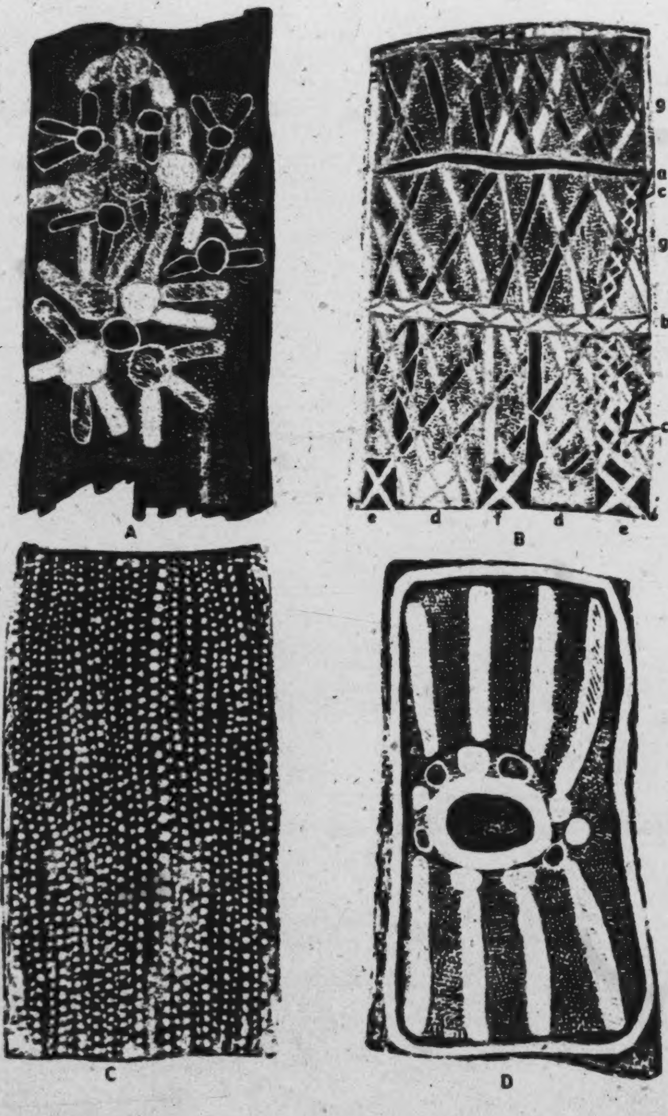

PLATE 50. *Secular Bark Paintings*
A, Sea-floor; B, Mangrove Swamp; C, Fish-man, Kumunga; D, Topography, Bathurst Island.

[p. 160 B]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958

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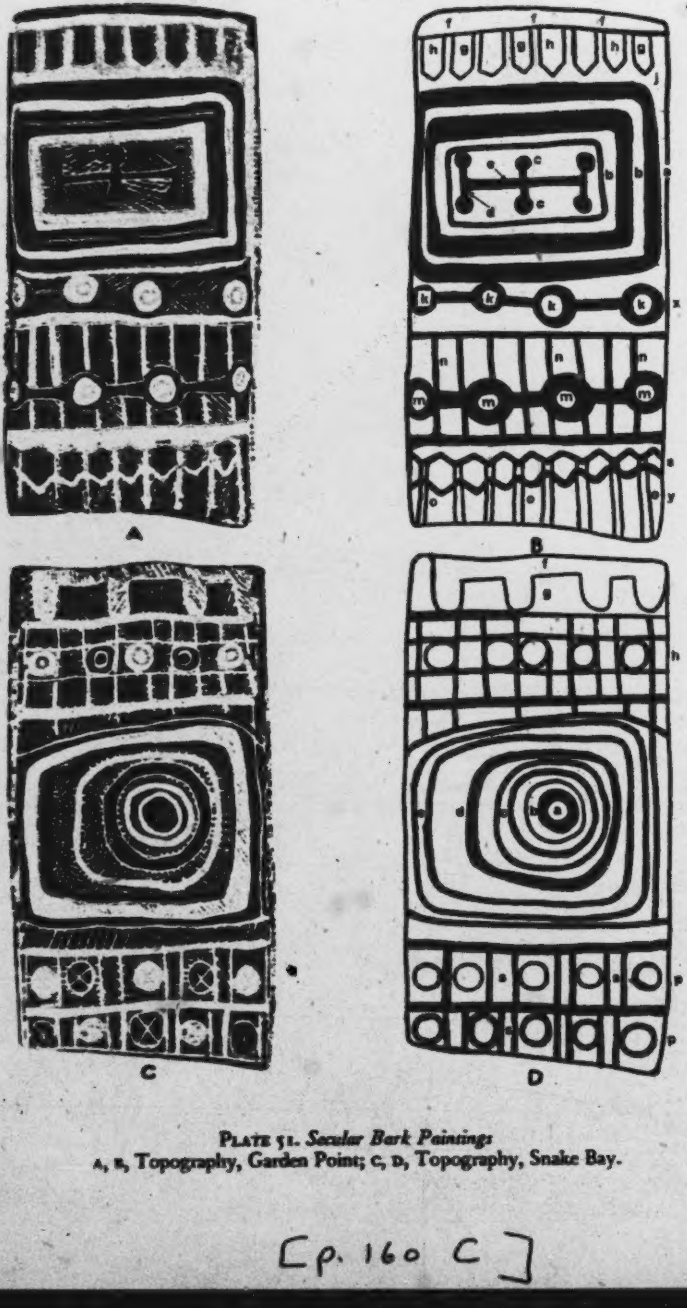

PLATE 51. *Secular Bark Paintings*
A, B, Topography, Garden Point; C, D, Topography, Snake Bay.

[p. 160 C]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958

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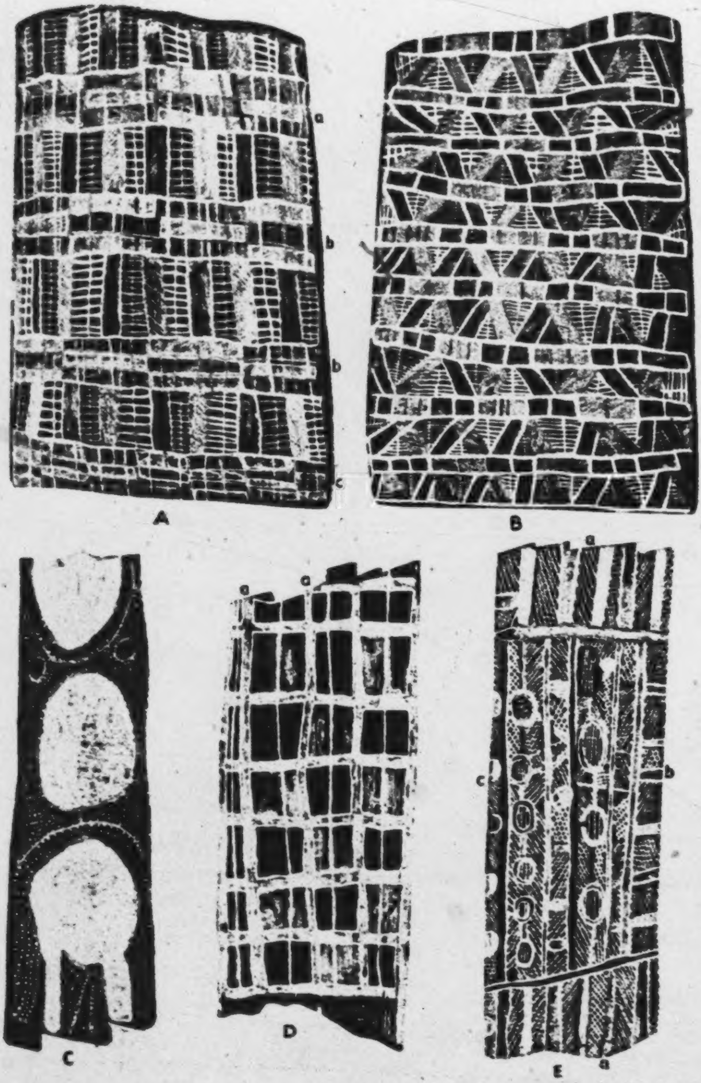

PLATE 52. *Secular Bark Paintings*
A, B, Sea-coast, Cape Van Diemen; C, Lagoons and Swamps; D, The Sea-shore; E, Jungle Scene.

[p. 160 D]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958

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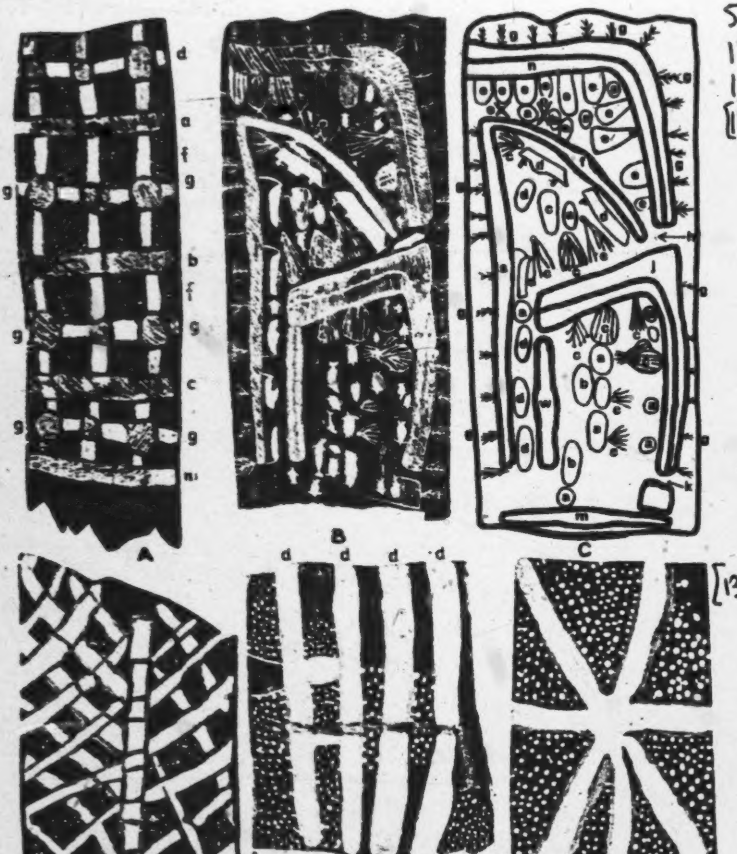

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[136]

PLATE 53. *Secular Bark Paintings*
A, Forest, Curtis Haven; B, C, Topography, Snake Bay; D, Fresh and Salt-water Streams; E, Topography, Goose Creek; F, Sea-scape.

[p. 160 E]

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[821]

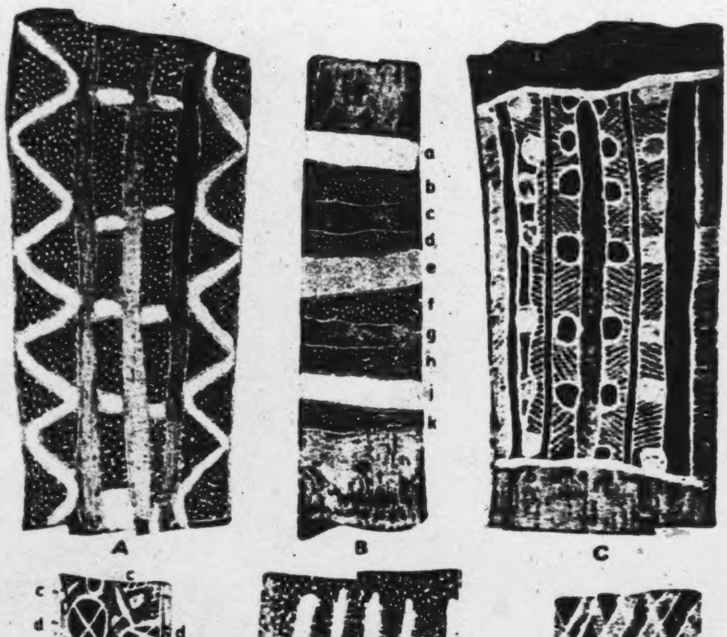
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PLATE 54. *Secular Bark Paintings*
A, Maratji, Goose Creek; B, Sea-shore; C, Sea and Sea-coast; D, Marine Creatures; E, Topography, Snake Bay; F, Jungle.

[p.160 F]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958

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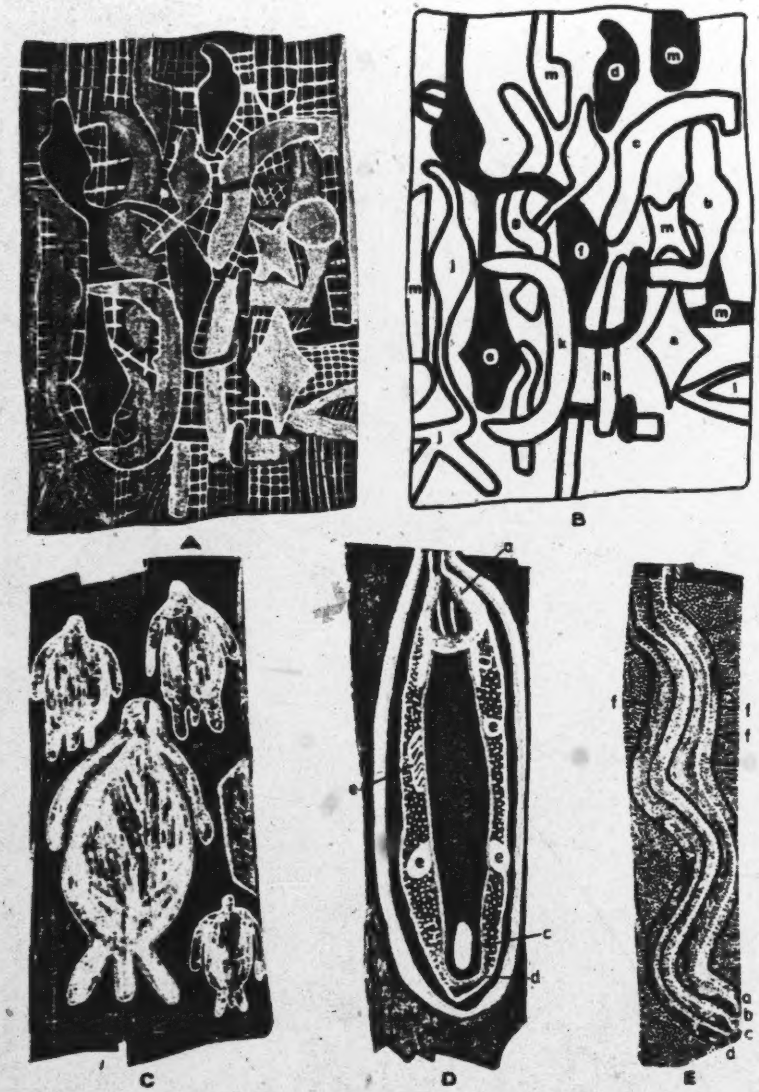

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[137]

PLATE 55. *Secular Bark Paintings*

A, B, Sea and Shore Creatures; C, Sea-going Turtles; D, Barramundi; E, Sea-snakes.

[p. 160 G]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958

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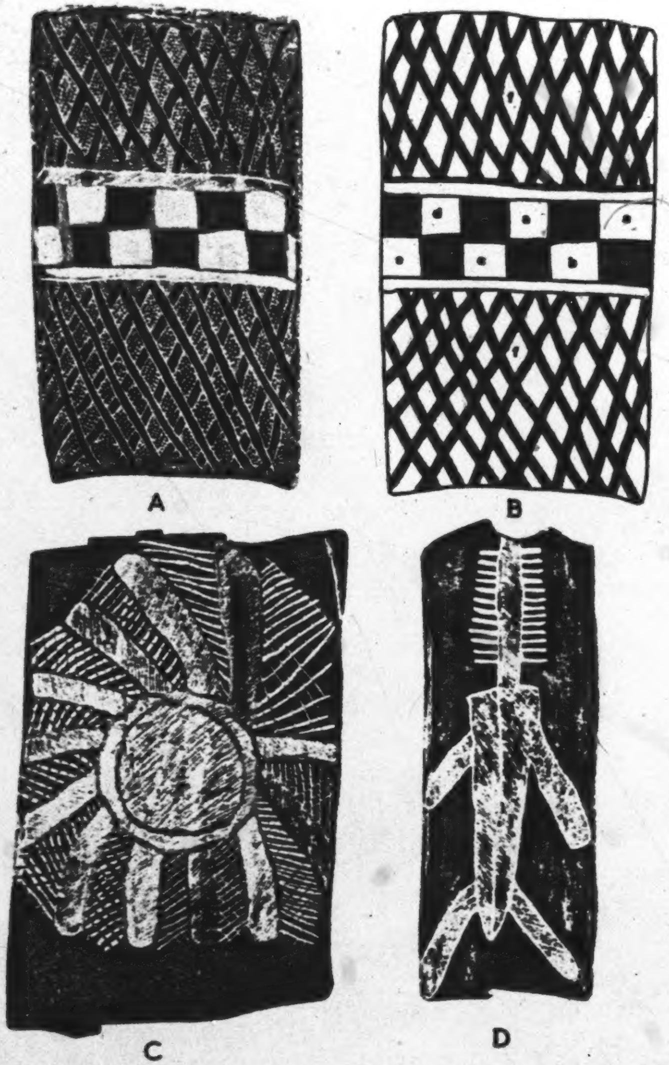

PLATE 56. *Secular Bark Paintings*
A, B, Creatures of the Sea; C, Jelly-fish; D, Saw-fish.

[p.160 H]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
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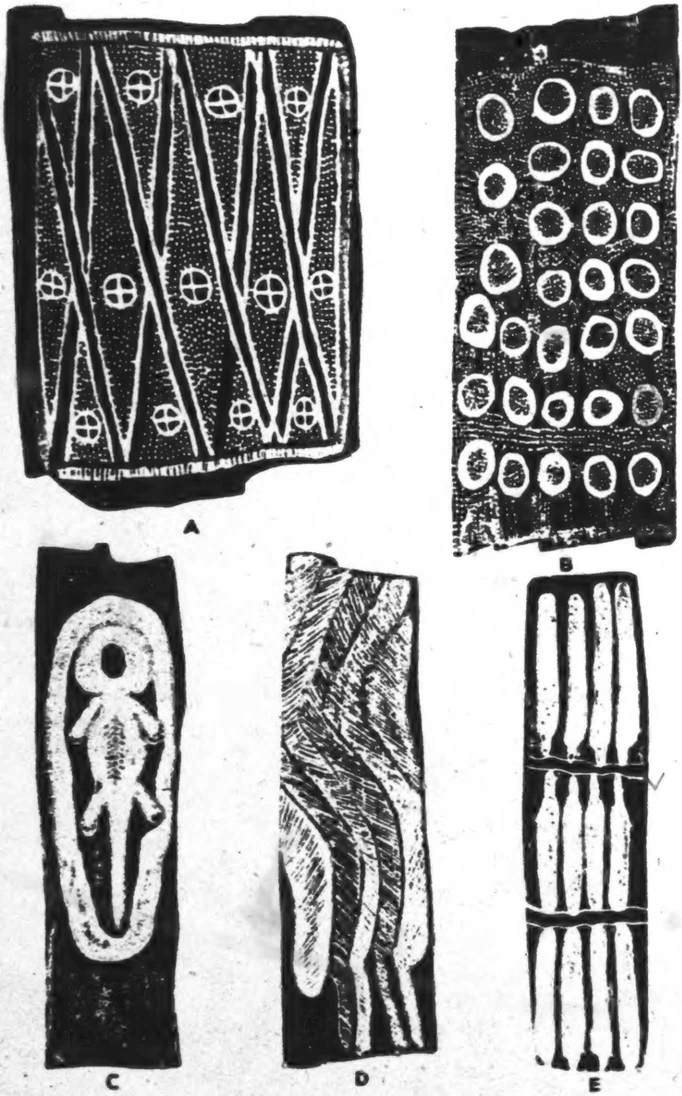

PLATE 57. *Secular Bark Paintings*
A, Edible Fruits; B, Poisonous Yams; C, Goanna; D, Sea-snakes; E, Sponges.

[p. 160 I]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958

OI20 Tiwi OI20

x532
[304]
[821]

[137]

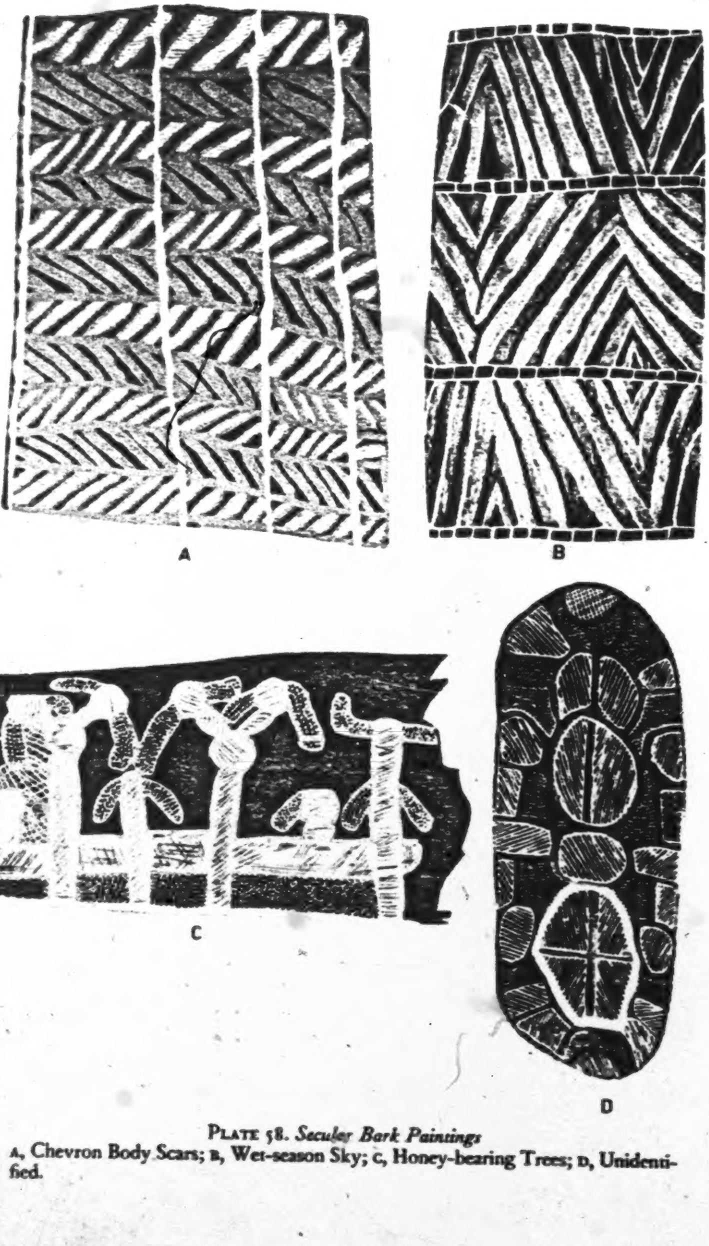

PLATE 58. *Secular Bark Paintings*
A, Chevron Body Scars; B, Wet-season Sky; C, Honey-bearing Trees; D, Unidentified.

[p. 160 J]

532x

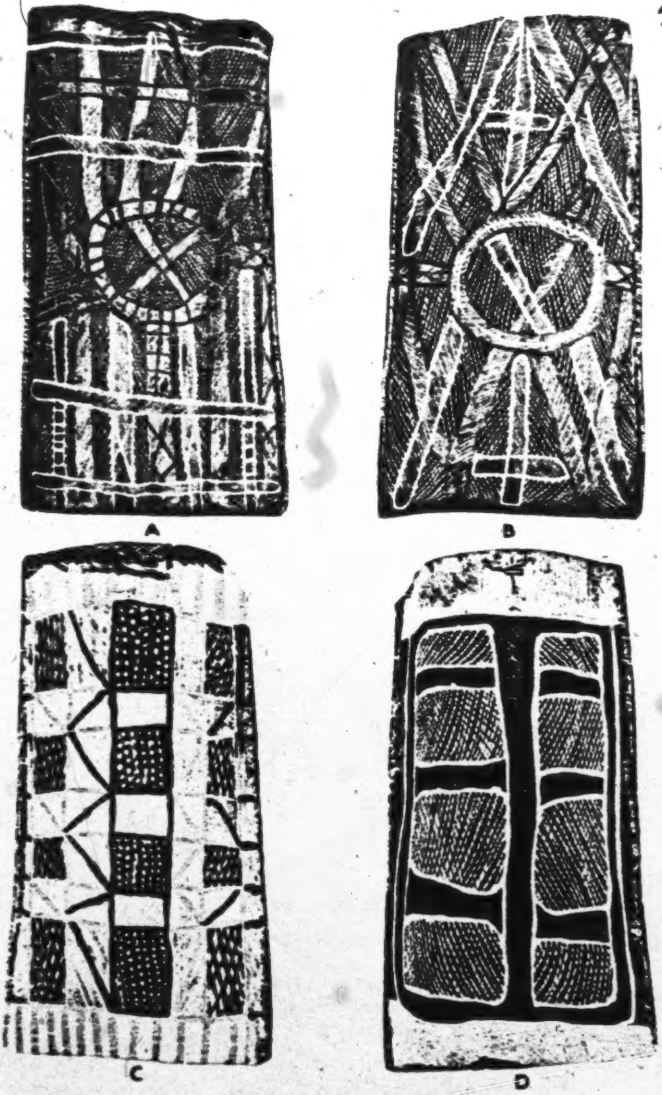

PLATE 59. *Secular Bark Paintings:*
A, B, C, D, Unidentified.

[p. 160 K]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

X532

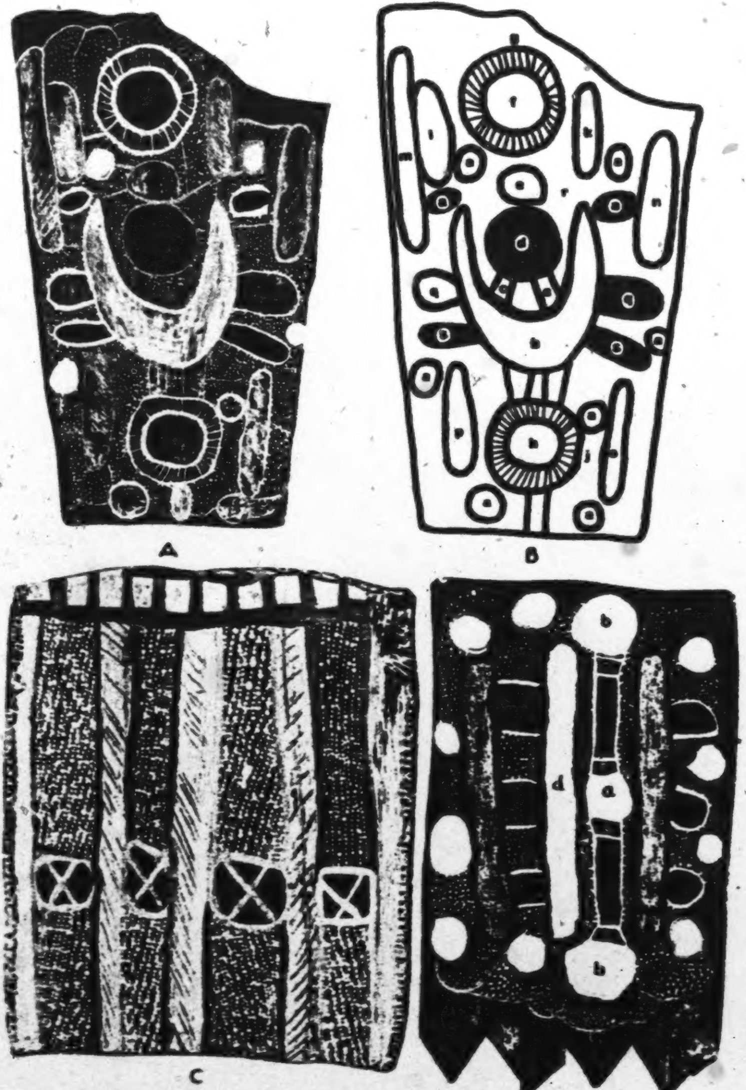

PLATE 60. *Astronomical Bark Paintings*
A, B, The Sun and the Moon; C, Unidentified; D, The Milky Way.

[p. 160 L]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958

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532x

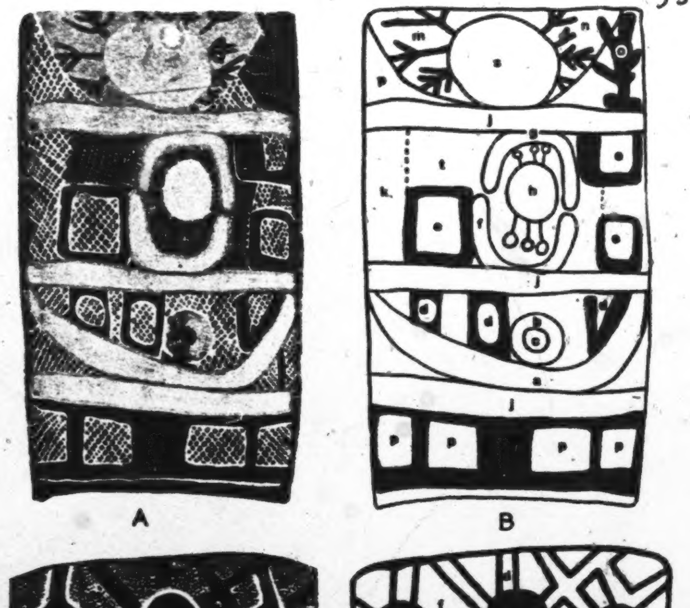

Plate 61. *Astronomical Bark Paintings*

A, B, The Sun, Moon and Stars; C, D, The Moon. n.

[p. 160 M]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958

OI20 Tiwi OI20

x532

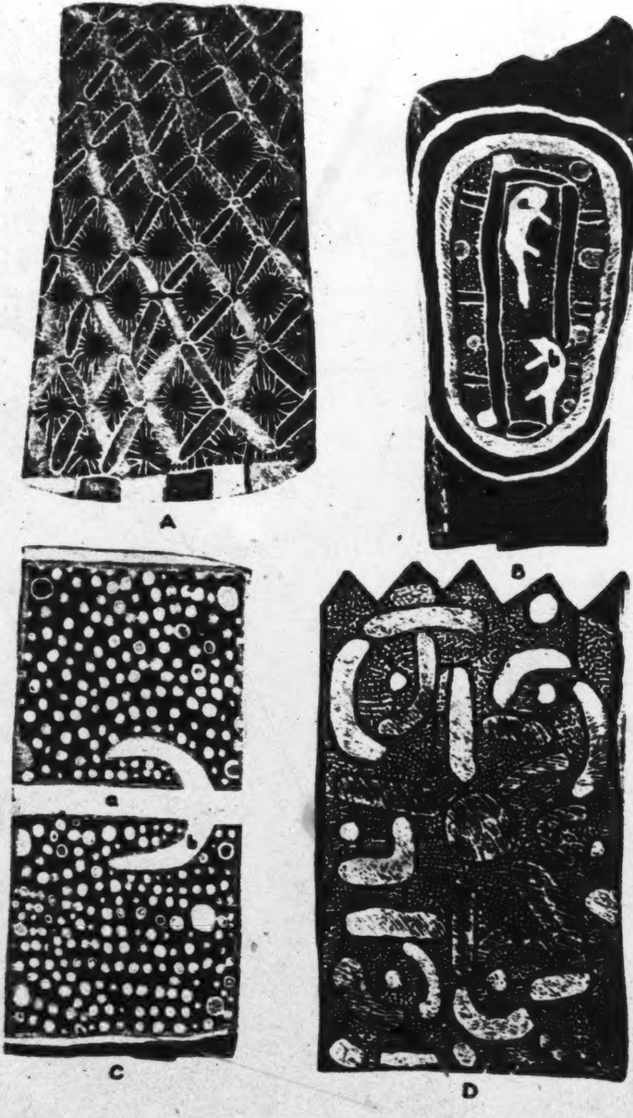

Plate 62. *Astronomical Bark Paintings*
A, The Milky Way; B, Orion and the Pleiades; C, The Night Sky; D, The Moon and his Wives.

[p. 160 N]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958

OI20 Tiwi OI20

532x

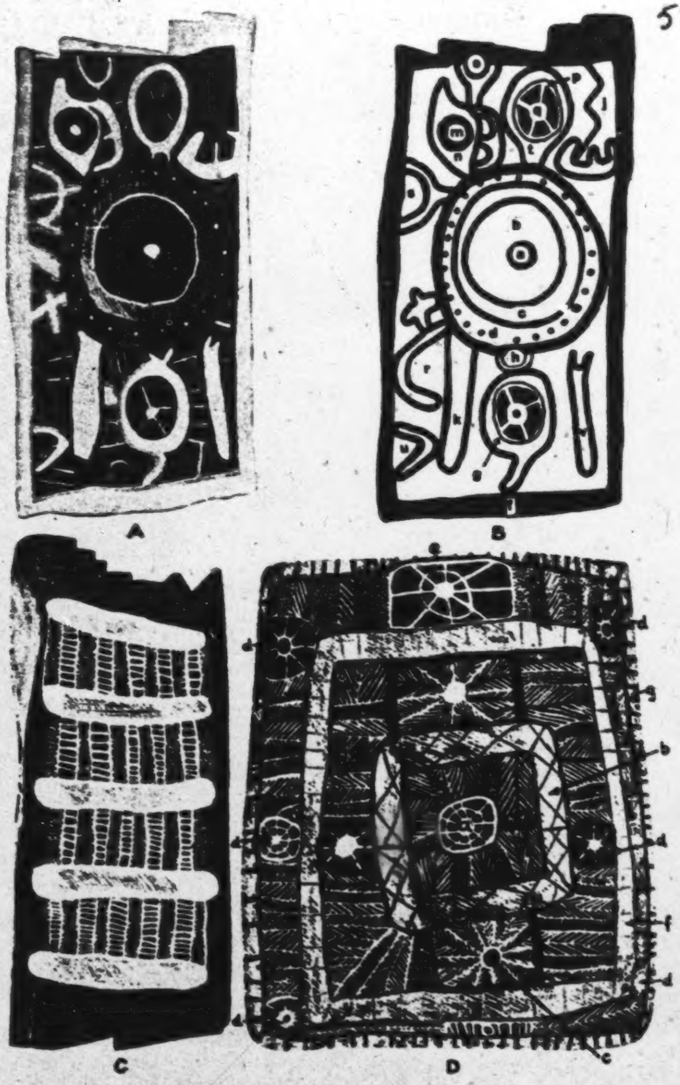
A
B
C
D
e
d
d
g
b
a
d
f
d
c
d

PLATE 63. *Astronomical Bark Paintings*
A, B, Sun-woman; C, The Milky Way; D, The Sky and the Upper World.

[p 160-0]

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958

OI20 Tiwi OI20

and black seeds. The dotted rectangles, *c*, *c*, at the top and bottom of the 532x
paintings are lily-covered lagoons (dots represent the blossoms); the cross- 133
hatched panels, *b*, *b*, etc., between them are spider webs in the trees and the 137
meandering lines, *d*, *d*, etc., along the outer edge, a jungle vine hanging from the branches of the trees. The black design *h*, in the middle of the painting, is the beach at Imalu; the irregular circles, *g*, *g*, etc., are large rocks on the shore, and the dots, the eucalyptus trees that grow along the top of the cliff. The series of large rectangles, *m*, *m* (top and bottom) indicate the sandy shores of the lagoons, and the short vertical lines at *k* (bottom), a forest of eucalypts.

A large *pukamani* basket, Pl. 51A, B, C, D, pictures (*a*) Pl. 51A, B, the topography near the mission station at Garden Point, near Punata (Fig. 1), and (b) Pl. 51C, D, the surroundings near the expedition camp.

Punata (Garden Point)

The series of rectangles on the obverse side of the basket (Pl. 51A, B), rep- [177]
resent a house at Garden Island mission. At *a*, are the foundations; *b*, *b*, the walls; *c*, *c*, the upright posts of the house; *d*, the beams of the roof, and at *e*, is the ridge pole.

At *f*, *f*, etc., on the upper edge, are the tall eucalyptus trees of the surrounding forest. At *j*, is the red ground on which the trees grow; at *g*, the dots are black and red seeds on the ground, and at *h*, the cross-hatching is the spider-webs in the trees.

At the bottom of the painting, *n*, *n*, etc., and *o*, *o*, etc., are more large eucalyptus trees. Symbols *k*, *k*, etc., and *m*, *m*, etc., represent hives of wild honey in the trees; the meandering lines at *s*, are jungle vines hanging from the branches; the cross-hatched areas are spider webs among the leaves, and the dots, as before, red and black seeds on the ground.

Snake Bay

The central black circle, *a*, on the reverse side of the basket, Pl. 51C, D, is a black rock in the sea, and the circle, *b*, immediately surrounding it, the broken water at its base, while circle *c*, indicates large rocks at the bottom of the cliffs, the white outer rectangle, *e*, being the sea-sand and the rectangle, *d*, the waves breaking on them. The white dots are the pebbles on the shore.

The upper and lower panels of the painting deal with the land. The white design *f*, on the upper edge, is a forest of large eucalyptus trees, and the cross-hatching, *g*, spider-webs on their branches. The five circles at *h*, are hives

X532 of wild honey in the hollow trees, and the dots, the red and black seeds of a
133 jungle vine.

137 On the lower panel, *s*, *s*, etc., indicate another forest of eucalyptus trees; the two rows of five circles at *p*, *p*, hives of wild bees, the cross-hatched panels between them spider webs, and the dots, the red and black seeds.

Biru Creek

Pl. 53E refers to a water-course, Biru, near the Goose Creek swamps, which is fresh in the southern and salt in the northern section, where it enters the sea.

The white panel *a*, is the saltwater end of Biru Creek, which is near the entrance of the Goose Creek swamps (Fig. 1), and the white band *c*, the freshwater end of the same creek. The black band *b*, is its banks. Panels *d*, *d*, etc., are white patches of sand and the dots, on the upper panel, patches of water-grass on the floor of the swamp. The bottom panel represents the open sea, the dots indicating patches of seaweed on the bottom.

Snake Bay

Pl. 53B, C, deals with the topography of Snake Bay.

Karslake Island (Wulrungku) is shown at *m*, on the lower edge; a sandbar (upper), the home of the spirit dogs, the *Wankuis* (p. 154) is at *f*; Iluwara inlet, in the Curtis Haven, is at *h* (middle right); a beach on the opposite shore of Iluwara inlet is at *j*, and Tjipripu Point at *w* (lower left). The long vertical line *s*, on the left, is Banjo beach, on which we camped; and *k* (lower right), a mangrove creek to the east.

Designs *e*, *e*, etc. (upper right), are mangrove trees growing on Karslake Island, and crosses, *o*, *o* (upper left), dead trees on the shore. Basket sponges, growing on rocks at the sea-bottom, are indicated at *c*, *c*, etc. (centre). [136] Turtles are at *a*, *a*, etc.; dugongs at *b*, *b*, etc., and canoes at *d*, *d*, etc. Many casuarina trees, *g*, *g*, etc., grow along the shore lines.

Lagoons and Swamps

This simple bark painting, Pl. 52C, pictures the lagoons at the rear of the expedition camp.

The upper white semi-circle is the swamp, immediately behind our camp, in which there are many paper-bark trees (*Melaleuca* sp.); the white dots are water-lilies growing in the swamp. The central white oval indicates an open lagoon from which the water runs into the sea.

The lower design indicates a swamp further inland, which is fed by two

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958

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freshwater streams (projections on the lower edge). The dots around this design are also water-lilies. 532x 133 137

Western Bathurst Island

Pl. 50D illustrates a hill, Ipitjulimpi, on western Bathurst Island.

The central black oval is Ipitjulimpi Hill, and the white outline, the tall annual grass which grows at its base. The circle of small discs are groups of boulders on the sides of the hill. The eight long ovals on the upper and lower sections of the paintings, are cabbage palms; the white outer border symbolizes red cliffs near by, and, the dots, the grass on the hillside.

2. THE SEA AND THE SWAMP-LANDS

The Sea and Sea-shore *

Three bark paintings, Pl. 54C, Pl. 53F, and Pl. 52D, deal with the sea and the sea-shore.

Pl. 54C refers to the sea and the sea-coast. The outer plain vertical panels symbolize the white sand on the sea-shore, and the outer black panels, batches of sea-weed. The light-coloured ovals are rocks under the water, covered with the sea-weed, and the black ovals are reefs of dark-coloured rocks on the bottom, which shelter the parrot fish and the rock cod. The cross-hatching indicates the white sand on the bottom of the ocean.

Pl. 53F depicts in a simple manner, the sea and the beach.

The intersecting lines on the upper panel represent an octopus, the dots, throughout the painting, small stones on the floor of the ocean; *a*, indicates the waves breaking on the beach; *b*, is a salt-water creek, and *c*, *c*, are its banks. [136]

Pl. 52D is a bark painting of the sea. The horizontal bars symbolize the waves breaking on the beach; the black rectangles, the dark-coloured stones, and the lighter-coloured rectangles, the red stones exposed at low water. The five vertical bands such as *a*, *a*, indicate the lines of debris, left by the retreating tide.

The Ocean Floor

Pl. 50A pictures the floor of the ocean. The light and dark coloured discs throughout the painting are boulders on the bottom, black projections on the dark-coloured discs, pearl-shell oysters, and those on the lighter discs, starfish. The dots indicate the sea-sand. [136]

A Salt-water Creek

x532 133 Pl. 53D pictures a salt-water creek, Tunangabupi, which flows into the sea at north-eastern Melville Island.

The central panel is the Tunangabupi creek, the rectangles along it alternately representing sandbanks and outcrops of rocks in its bed. The lines forming the diamond patterns, indicate a series of freshwater streams which flow into the Tunangabupi Creek, and the white dots, the shrubs growing on their banks.

A Mangrove Swamp

Pl. 50B depicts a mangrove swamp at Cape Fourcroy.

Transverse band *a*, is a dry creek bed whose waters run into the swamp during the wet season, and *b*, a salt-water creek among the mangroves. The lines of diamond-like patterns at *c*, *c*, indicate a muddy salt-water creek, and the crossed designs *d*, *d*, muddy patches among the trees. At *e*, *e*, are fallen trees with mud on their roots, and *f*, is a large tree with its roots exposed. The intersecting lines in panels, *g*, *g*, indicate a forest of mangrove trees, and the dotted background, edible mangrove fruit lying on the ground.

The Sea-coast at Cape Van Diemen

Both sides of a large *pukamuni* basket, Pl. 52A and Pl. 52B, picture the sea-coast adjacent to Imilu, at Cape Van Diemen, north-western Melville Island.

The horizontal lines, *a*, on Pl. 52A, the obverse side of the basket, indicate the grass and fallen leaves on the sea-shore; the two bands, *b*, *b*, represent the sharp eroded rocks on the water's edge, and the lower band, *c*, weeds growing on the rocks under the water.

Throughout the design, the darker-coloured barred rectangles, with white [136] lines, are black trepang, and those with grey lines, white trepang. The plain rectangles indicate the sandy bed of the ocean.

On Pl. 52B, the reverse side of the same *pukamuni* basket, the series of transverse bands picture flat rocks on the edge of the sea, and the barred triangles, the water surging through them. The high cliffs at Imilu, Cape Van Dieman, are indicated by the many v-shaped designs.

The Sea and Mangrove Creeks

Pl. 54B is a particularly simple design which the artist once used to decorate a *pukamuni* pole.

The plain panels at the top and bottom of the paintings, represent the open sea; the transverse panels, *a*, *c*, *e*, *g*, *j*, refer to the salt-water creeks in the mangrove swamps, and the dotted panels, *b*, *d*, *f*, *h*, and *k*, to the seaweed growing on the sea-bottom. 532x

3. THE FAUNA

The Sea-Creatures

Two bark paintings, 55A, B, and 56A, B, depict the creatures who live on the floor of the ocean. 532x

136

On Pl. 55A, B, design *a*, represents a shark; design *b*, and *f*, are large sea-snakes; *e*, is a smaller species, and *g*, another snake that lives in the mangrove swamps. At *c*, is a saw-fish; at *d*, a porpoise, and at *h*, a sea-slug or *beche-de-mer*. Designs, *m*, *m*, etc., are shells; and *l*, boulders on the sea-bottom; *k*, is a creek in the mangrove swamp, and *j*, a sandbank in Snake Bay.

Pl. 56A, B, also deals with the creatures of the sea. In the central section panels *a*, *a*, are star-fish; panel *b*, refers to an octopus; *c*, to pearl-shell oysters; *d*, to a crab, and *e*, to a turtle. The cross-hatching, throughout the design, is symbolical of the scale pattern on a crocodile skin, and the two transverse white bands are the creature's intestines.

The Snakes

Two bark paintings, Pl. 57D and Pl. 55E, depict the snakes of Melville and Bathurst Islands.

Pl. 57D pictures, in conventionalized form, a number of sea-snakes, some of which were poisonous and much feared.

Pl. 55E illustrates a number of snakes that live in the forest and jungle adjacent to the expedition.

Reading from the right, *a*, is the venomous bush snake, *jaruwini*; *b*, a copper-coloured non-venomous snake, *ilinga*; *c*, a venomous snake, *buliaringa*, that lives in the mangrove swamps, and *d*, a harmless water-snake, *patinga*. The short, more or less horizontal lines at *f*, *f*, are tall eucalypts in the forest and the dots, the grass at their base. [137]

A Goanna

Pl. 57C is a simple X-ray bark painting of a goanna, on which the backbone and ribs are indicated. This is the only example of that curious art form which I saw on Melville Island, although on the adjacent mainland, the X-ray art has reached its highest development.[88] [171]

The Sea-going Turtle

Pl. 55C pictures the sea-going turtles. The central design represents the

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[88] Mountford, 1956, p. 256.

x532
136

large logger-head turtle, *Ringa*, whose totemic place is at Juapinta, north of Karslake Island (see Pl. 12c).

In the lower right is a young logger-head, and in the upper left, a hawk-bill turtle, *Garagalani*, which when a woman, assisted in the *pukamuni* of *Purukupali*.

On the upper right of the painting is a green turtle and on the right-hand edge, a canoe which the aborigines had used to capture the turtles.

A Barramundi

This bark painting, Pl. 55D, pictures a barramundi, *alaminga*, a large fish which lives in either fresh or salt water.

The fish, *c*, is shown within the inner white oval. Its head is at *a*, its eyes being the two short lines within *a*; its tail is at *d*, and its fins at *e*, *e*, *e*, *e*. The dots represent the marks on its skin.

The outer oval is made up of red, white, yellow and black lines. Reading from the outside, the red oval indicates the land; the white, the sandy beach; the yellow, the breaking waves, and the black, the open sea.

A Jelly-fish

Pl. 56C illustrates an unidentified jelly-fish, *indringa*. The central disc is the body; the radiating lines, the tentacles, and the cross-hatched areas the ocean.

A Saw-fish, Jidati

Pl. 56D is a simple, representational bark painting of the saw-fish, *jidati*, in which the saw of the creature is given special prominence and the fins are shown as legs.

Sea Sponges

Pl. 57E pictures a number of sponges growing on the floor of the ocean. Although sea sponges do not appear to have any specific value to the aborigines, they are often pictured in the bark paintings.

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4. THE FLORA

Edible Jungle Fruits

Pl. 57A illustrates a number of edible fruits that grow in the jungle and the forest.

The crosses surrounded by a circle, represent the fruits of two different eugenias. They are about the size of an apple; one, a red fruit, is called *binamia*, and the other, a white fruit, *tauraruina*.

The intersecting diagonal lines symbolize the trunks of those fruit-bearing trees, and the dots on the ground, a small edible berry. 532 x 137

The Poisonous Yams

Pl. 57B illustrates two of the poisonous yams, the *kulama* and the *kwoni*. These yams have to be sliced and soaked in water for about three days to remove the poison. They are then edible. The dots on the background indicate grass and shrubs.

The Jungle Trees

This simple painting, Pl. 54F, represents two species of trees that grow in the jungle. The diagonal lines such as *a*, *a*, etc., leading from lower left to upper right of the painting, symbolize a large white-barked jungle tree, and those crossing at right-angles, i.e., *b*, *b*, etc., the milkwood tree. The unpainted diamonds indicate the bare ground and the small plants on the floor of the forest.

A Eucalyptus Forest

The central horizontal panel, *a*, of Pl. 54E represents a track that leads through the forest adjacent to our camp. The five vertical white lines are large eucalyptus trees in a nearby forest which have been hollowed out by the termites, the hollows being indicated by the two upper horizontal lines, *b*, *b*, in the top panel. The dots indicate grass and low shrubs.

On the lower panel, the four crescents are the new moons; the dots, the stars in the sky, and the circles, rocky outcrops. I did not find out whether these rocky outcrops were celestial or terrestrial features. [821]

A Jungle Scene, Imilu

Pl. 52E pictures the trees in a jungle at Imilu, Cape Van Diemen.

The short vertical lines, *a*, *a*, in the top and bottom panels and the short horizontal lines at *b*, on the right-hand edge are trees in the jungle, and the spaces between them, the sandy ground. The five semi-circles at *c*, on the left-hand edge and the ovals in the panels, are the trunks and branches of other jungle trees, and the cross-hatching is a carpet of fallen leaves.

Honey-bearing Trees

The painting, Pl. 58C, deals only with the honey-bearing blossoms of the trees. The long horizontal rectangle is a fallen tree in the forest and the six upright symbols, the trunks of living eucalyptus trees with their upper x 532 137 branches in full blossom. The dots at the base of the painting indicate eucalyptus blossoms lying on the ground.

A Forest, Curtis Haven

Pl. 53A illustrates the topography at Curtis Haven.

Transverse panel *a*, is a stringy-bark tree,[53] *b*, *c*, are two woolly-butts and *m*, is an ironwood. The short white panels at *f*, *f*, are cycad palms; the lines of circles at *g*, *g*, *g*, low hills, and the short white panels between them, cabbage palms. The cross-hatching indicates the grass on the hillsides.

5. MISCELLANEOUS AND UNIDENTIFIED

x 532 304

Body Scars

Pl. 58A refers to the chevron scars on the bodies of the older men and women; it has no other meaning.

The four white vertical lines indicate the scars on their legs; the many transverse lines, those across the abdomens, and the lines of dark and light-coloured chevron designs, the scars on the abdomens, backs, upper arms, and thighs.[54]

The Salmon-man

x 532 302 At the *pukamuni* of *Purukupali*, a salmon-man painted himself and his many wives with a series of large spots like those on the basket; when at the completion of the ceremony, those people became fish, they still retained the coloured spots on their bodies. The dots on Pl. 50C are symbolical of those on the body of the mythical salmon-man.

Design for a Pukamuni Pole

x 532 136 Pl. 54D is a similar design to one which the artist once painted on a *pukamuni* pole he made for the dead man, *Kulatina*. The designs,[55] which are not linked with any myth or secular story, were, according to the artist, formed in his mind by the sound of the waves breaking on a nearby coast.

The four groups of crossed lines, *g*, *g*, etc., represent trepang, the lighter coloured being the white and the darker, the black species. The smaller

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[53] These are species of eucalypts.

[54] The older generation of Melville and Bathurst Islanders were decorated with these scars. The custom has been discontinued in recent years. Spencer, 1928, Fig. 439, illustrates examples.

[55] Spencer, 1928, Fig. 475, illustrates poles decorated with a design similar to bark paintings, Pl. 54D.

groups of crossed lines at *c*, *c*, are two stingrays; *d*, *d*, etc., are two dolphins; 532x
the darker crossed discs, *e*, *e*, and similar patterns, stones on the beach, and 136
the lighter, such as *f*, *f*, etc., freshwater cockles. There is an unidentified salt-water fish at *h* and a shark at *k*.

Unidentified

I do not know the meanings of the designs on the bark paintings, Pl. 58D, 532x
nor those on the three *pukamuni* baskets, Pl. 59A, B, Pl. 59C, D, and Pl. 60C.

Two of the baskets, Pl. 59A, B, and Pl. 59C, D, were brought by the Bathurst Island group when they attended the *pukamuni* of *Waniamperi*.

CHAPTER VII

The Astronomy of the Tiwi

171 773 The Tiwi's knowledge of the night sky does not appear to be as extensive as that of the aborigines of the adjoining Arnhem Land (Mountford, 1956, Part 6).

821 Although myths relating to the sun, the moon, the Milky Way, the stars and Orion and the Pleiades were often told, I was unable to find any relating to the Southern Cross, Scorpio, the Magellan Clouds and other constellations well-known to the aborigines of Arnhem Land.

The Universe

821 The Tiwi believe that the earth is flat, and so limited in area that, if they travel far from the shores of their tribal country, they would fall over the edge. As evidence of this they point out that, in the morning they can see *Wuriupranala*, the sun-woman, rise above the eastern rim and, at the end of the day, disappear beneath the western rim of the world.

The earth, too, is of limited thickness, the aborigines believing that, if they dug a hole sufficiently deep they would reach the lower world, *Ilara.*[16]

772 The aboriginal universe of the Tiwi consists of four levels, (*a*) a subterranean world, Ilara, (*b*) the earth on which the aborigines live, (*c*), the sky-land, Juwuku, and (*d*) an upper world, Tuniruna.

772 776 821 On Ilara where it is always dark, there are two high stony ranges with a valley between. It is along this valley that the sun-woman, *Wuriupranala*, and according to some informants, the moon-man, *Tjapara*, guided only by the light of their glowing torch of bark, travel each day from the western horizon to their homes in the east. As there are no plants or animals on Ilara, the celestial travellers cannot gather any food during their underground journey, although they can quench their thirst at a stream which flows from the top of one of the high mountains.

During the wet season, *Pakadringa*, the man of the thunderstorms; *Tomituka*, the woman of the monsoon rains; *Bumerali*, the lightning woman, with her husband and her many children, make their home on the sky-land,

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[171] [16] I did not find a belief among the Melville Islanders, like that of the aborigines of Groote Eylandt, that the earth was a thin crust resting on the top of the water. (Mountford, 1956, p. 67.)

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958

OI20 Tiwi OI20

Juwuku; while the sun-woman, the men of the Milky Way, the star women 772
and the moon-man (except for a short period each month) travel daily across 776
its surface. 821

Above the sky is another world, Tuniruna. This is the day-time home of numberless star women, the *Tapalinga*, and the men of the Milky Way, the *Maludaianini*. During the dry season, *Pakadringa*, *Tomituka* and *Bumerali*, with her family leave the sky-world, Juwuku, and make their homes in Tuniruna.

Unlike the Ilara, the lowest world, Tuniruna resembles the earth except that there is no sea, although there are many freshwater streams and swamps. All the creatures and plants that live on Melville Island, with the exception of the saltwater fish, are also at Tuniruna.

Every morning the inhabitants of the upper world leave their camps, the women to gather the plant foods of the forest, the men to hunt and capture the creatures, such as freshwater fish and the geese, ducks, pelicans and jabirus, that live in the extensive swamps. Also, many fruits grow at Tuniruna, some of which were specifically named, i.e., *rakarina*, the wild plum; *muraranina*, the white-fruited eugenia; *kinamia*, the red-fruited eugenia; *putetaluma*, a small egg-shaped fruit about three-eighths of an inch long; *kwerka*, cycad fruit, and the various yams.

By the time the sun-woman has sunk below the western horizon and extinguished her torch, the inhabitants of Tuniruna, the upper world, have returned from their foodgathering and are lighting their camp-fires to cook the food they have brought in. The light from these fires illuminates the upper world as brightly during the night-time as the sun-woman, with her blazing torch, illuminates the earth during the day-time.

About November, *Pakadringa*, *Tomituka* and *Bumerali* leave Tuniruna 776
and travel from place to place in the sky-world, shedding rain on the parched 821
earth. During this time, the aborigines claim that those with good hearing can distinguish a low "Sh . . . sh . . .", the pleasure call of the thirsty trees as their roots drink the moisture from the sodden ground. It is then that the trees and plants of the upper world, using the raindrops as a vehicle, send [824]
their spirits (analogous to the human *Pitapitui*) (p. 146), to the ground beneath, where they grow into plants similar to their progenitors in the upper world.[27] That is, all the plants and trees in the land of the Tiwi were once, as tiny spirits, dropped from the upper world, Tuniruna.

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[27] I did not specifically inquire whether the creatures in the upper world also sent down their spirits in the same manner as the plants. However, as both plants and human [124]
beings have a spirit origin, it is reasonable to assume that the creatures originate in a similar manner. Further research on this subject will be of considerable interest.

824 This belief probably accounts for the fact that I did not hear any songs chanted, or witness any ceremonies (with the possible exception of the *kulama*) that would bring about a plentiful supply of food. Nor did I hear [171] of any increase centres such as I saw on Groote Eylandt, (Mountford, 1956, pp. 84, 91), and were seen by Spencer and Gillen (1899, p. 166), and myself (1948, p. 145) in Central Australia.

The Sky and the Upper World

x532. 821 772 Pl. 63D is a bark painting of the sky and the upper world, Tuniruna. The central series of concentric circles represent an unidentified planet, one of the wives of *Tjapara*, the moon-man; the designs, *d*, *d*, *d*, *d*, are some of the stars, *Tapalinga*; *f*, *f*, are the plum trees (already mentioned), which grow in the upper world. The radiating lines are the limbs of the plum trees.

The inner square, *b*, is the upper world, Tuniruna, the chevron patterns are the clouds in the sky, and the outer square the surface of the earth.

The groups of dots, throughout the painting, are the spirit fruits of the many trees at Tuniruna, which (as mentioned earlier), fall from the upper world to the earth beneath.

The Sun-woman, Wuriupranala

773 776 A myth, belonging to the early creation period, tells of how *Wuriupranala*, one of the first women, was given the task of keeping alight a torch of blazing bark. When, after the *pukamuni* of *Purukupali*, the men and women changed themselves into creatures and plants, *Wuriupranala* became the sun-woman, who travels daily across the sky, her torch of blazing bark providing the world with light and heat.

776 821 However, before *Wuriupranala* sets out from the eastern horizon, she powders her body with red ochre, the dust of which flying into the air, reddens the clouds of early morning.

When she reaches the western horizon, *Wuriupranala* again powders her body (this accounts for the brilliant sunsets), extinguishes her torch and rests for a while beside a celestial lagoon, Kumpinulu, before returning to the east along a path through the subterranean world, Ilara. On this journey, she is guided only by the light from the glowing end of her smouldering torch.[68]

x532 773 Three bark paintings, Pl. 60A, B, Pl. 61A, B, and Pl. 63A, B, deal with the myth of the sun-woman.

776 821 The designs on one side of a *pukamuni* basket, Pl. 61A, B, picture the sun, moon and stars.

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[68] See pp. 35, 40 for more details of the sun-woman.

The crescent, *a*, symbolises the eastern horizon, beneath which both the sun-woman and moon-man have their camps; the transverse panels, *j, j, j*, indicate the western horizon. 532x 773 776

The disc, *b*, is the sun-woman, [illegible]*ranala*, while the black dot in the centre is her life essence, *imunka* (p. 137). 821

The sun-woman again is represented by the white disc, *s*, on the upper edge. This time she has several of the blazing torches, *m, n*, which she carries across the sky. Her many camps in the east are at *p, p*, etc. (lower edge).

The white oval, *h* (upper centre), is the moon-man, *Tjapara*, with his torches, shown as a series of radiating lines. Crescent, *g*, is the waxing, *f*, the waning moon, and the three adjacent squares, *e, e, e*, are places in the east where the moon-man made his camps. The cross-hatched areas, *p, k*, etc., indicate the men of the Milky Way, *Maludaianini*, and the groups of dots, such as *t*, the star-women, *Tapalingas*. At *o* (upper right) is an unidentified celestial tree.

Pl. 60A, B, pictures two suns, *Wuriupranala* and *Murupiangkala*,[18] the moon, *Tjapara* and the stars, *Tapalinga*.

One of the sun-women, *Wuriupranala*, is shown at *f* (upper edge) the circle of radiating lines, *g*, symbolizing the flames of her bark torch. At *h*, on the bottom of the painting, is the other sun-woman, *Murupiangkala* with her bark torch, *j*. The moon-man, *Tjapara*, is at *b*, his head at *e*, his shoulders at *c*, and his genitals at *d*.

The oval at *k* (upper right), is a mountain in the east from the top of which *Wuriupranala* or *Murupiangkala* alternately set out on their daily journey across the sky. The white oval at *l* (upper left) indicates the mountain on the western horizon where the sun-women rest for a while before they travel to the Kumpinulu lagoon, and prepare and eat their meal before returning to the east via the underground road, *m* (upper left).

The designs on the lower edge of the painting deal with the journey of the sun-woman, *Murupiangkala*; the white design *o*, is the mountain in the east from which she sets out on her journey across the sky; *p* represents the mountain in the west where she finishes her journey.

At *a*, *a*, etc., are the wives of *Tjapara*, the planets, Venus, Mercury, Jupiter and Mars. Black ovals, *s*, *s*, are dark-coloured rain clouds, and ovals, *q*, *q*, clouds reddened by sunrise and sunset light. The dots are the star-women, the *Tapalingas*, the wives of the men of the Milky Way.

Pl. 63A, B, deals with the sky journey of the sun-woman, *Wuriupranala*.

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[18] The artist claimed that two sun-women travelled alternately across the sky. This however, was not the dominant belief.

532 At *c*, is the sun-woman with her *imunka* (life essence) (see Pl. 61A, a).
821 Her palm-leaf baskets are at *u* and *r* (left); her hair-string belts at *k*, *v*
776 (bottom); a dingo-skin hair ornament is at *s* (left), and her head at *m* (top
left).

773 The place where the sun woman appears above the eastern horizon is indicated at *f* (bottom) with her mid-day camp at *g*. There she makes a fire, *e* (the four radiating lines being the firewood), and cooks the food she has collected during the morning. Black rain clouds are indicated at *d*, and a thin cloud, which partly obscures the sun, at *h*.

The upper section of the painting deals with the evening camp *o*, of the sun-woman. Her fire and firewood are at *p*, *q*.

At *n*, on the upper left, is the daughter of the sun-woman (an unidentified star), the central dot at *m*, symbolizing her eye.

The Moon-man, Tjapara

773 At the conclusion of the fight between the moon-man, *Tjapara* and *Purukupali*, during creation times, the moon-man went up to the sky, bearing on his face the wounds he received at the hands of *Purukupali*.[60]

It was then *Purukupali* decreed that the whole of creation once dead, would
remain dead for ever. However, *Tjapara*, the moon-man, partly escaped that
821 decree, for, although he dies for three days every month, his life is eternally
776 renewed.

As soon as *Tjapara* comes to life, he eats huge meals of the flesh of the mangrove crabs, which makes him grow fat and round at the end of a fortnight. However, this food makes him so ill that he sickens and dies.

The aborigines look upon the thin crescent of the waning moon as the skeleton of *Tjapara*,[61] and the body of the moon (visible by earth shine) as his spirit, *imunka*.

During his daily journey across the sky, the moon-man follows the same path as the sun-woman. He, however, carries a much smaller torch.

At one time the moon-man used to return to the east by a road just under the southern horizon. But a nest of hornets, which lived along that road, stung him so badly that he changed his path and now returns to his home by a northern route.[62]

The moon has four wives who live in the sky with him. They are the

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[60] See p. 29 for details of the fight between *Purukupali* and *Tjapara*.

[825] [61] A larval form of one of the cockroaches which curls up into an almost complete circle, is called *Tjaparalinga*, the son of the moon.

[184] [62] Most informants, however, said that the moon returned to the east through the same underground world as the sun-woman.

planets, Venus, Mercury, Jupiter and Mars. My informants were certain, 776
however, that *Tjapara* had many more wives in his eastern camp. 821

When a ring forms around the moon, during moist weather, the aborigines believe the moon-man is taking part in a *kulama* ceremony. The ring is the mound of earth around the ceremonial circle, the *milimika* (p. 134), inside of which a multitude of star people are dancing and singing the *kulama* songs.

Two bark paintings illustrate the myth of the moon, Pl. 61C, D, and 532x
Pl. 62D. 821

On Pl. 61C, D, one side of a *pukamani* basket illustrates the moon and the 776
clouds. [773]

In the centre, at *b*, is the crescent moon, *Tjapara*, the black oval, *a*, indicating his genitals. The monsoon clouds, *saruwapitjina* (cumulus-nimbus) of the wet season are indicated by the six black circles, *c*, *c*, etc., and cumulus clouds, *kumbarasina*, by the three circles on the left-hand side at *e*, *e*, *e*. The older aborigines referred to these clouds as hills in the sky. The intersecting lines, *d*, *d*, etc., are "young" cumulus clouds, which, when they appear in the sky at the beginning of the wet season, remind the natives it is time to search the trees of the forest for the hives of the wild bees.

The surface of the ground is indicated by the long rectangle, *g*, on the lower edge, and the place of the stars, by the groups of dots at *f*, *f*, etc.

Pl. 62D pictures the moon-man, *Tjapara*, and his many wives.

The central circle is the full moon, the lighter coloured crescents and ovals being the white clouds that sometimes obscure the moon at night; the dark-coloured, but similar designs are the clouds made yellow with the sunset light. The white circles are the planets, the wives of the moon man, and the dots, the stars, the wives of the men of the Milky Way.

The Moon and the Stars

Pl. 62C is a painting of the night sky. The crescent, *b*, is the new moon, 532x 821
Tjapara, and the white vertical panel, the road, along which he travels.

The larger circle on the right hand of the painting represents the morning star, probably Venus, and that on the left, the evening star. The many smaller circles are unidentified stars in the night sky. These are the wives of the men of the Milky Way, the *Maludaianini*.

The Men of the Milky Way

In creation times, certain men, the *Maludaianinis*, although each had 773
many wives, were always sneaking off into the jungle with the wives of other men.

773 This behaviour led to a great deal of trouble, developing later into a fight in which many of the *Maludaianini* men were wounded.

After that fight, the *Maludaianini* men rose into the sky and became the Milky Way; their wives were turned into stars.

776 When the sun-woman sinks beneath the western horizon, and the light
821 from the blazing torch leaves the sky, the *Maludaianini* travel in a long line
across the firmament (similar to the processional caterpillars at the beginning
of the wet season), visiting their wives, the stars, as they go.

Early in the evening the men of the Milky Way rub their hands over their
[827] bodies to remove the dried perspiration. This dried perspiration, falling on
the eyelids of the aboriginal people, make them heavy with sleep.[63]

x 532 Three bark paintings, Pl. 60D, Pl. 62A, and Pl. 63C, illustrate the myth of the men of the Milky Way.

776 The black bars between *c*, *c*, and *c*, *c*, Pl. 60D, are the men of the Milky
821 Way, the *Maludaianini*; the white disc, *a*, being their camp, while similar
white designs, *b*, *b*, indicate the camps of their star wives.

The central white panel, *d*, is the Milky Way; the dark squares, *e*, *e*, etc., are the red clouds at sunrise and sunset, the dark-coloured vertical panels on either side of *d*, white cumulus clouds at night, and the six black discs, dark-coloured clouds, in the night sky.

Pl. 62A is another painting of the Milky Way. The circles with the radiating lines are the camp fires of the stars, the background being the shadows cast by those fires. The Coal Sack in which there are no fires, is the camp of the star women.[64]

The lighter panels, leading from the upper left to the lower right, are the men of the Milky Way, the *Maludaianini*, the darker panels, from upper right to lower left, indicate the night sky.

Reading from the left on the lower edge, panels one, three and five symbolize cumulus clouds, *Kumbaratina*, of the night sky, and two, four and six, unidentified clouds, called *aratinia*.

The dotted panels on Pl. 63C represent the men of the Milky Way, the barred panels, the "roads", i.e., dark spaces, in the galaxy, and the five horizontal panels, eucalyptus trees in the firmament.

[855] [63] The aboriginal women, to the accompaniment of a lullaby, send their children to sleep by rubbing their fingers together above the face of the child in the same manner as the *Maludaianini* do in the sky.

[64] The Coal Sack is visible at Melville Island only during the hot "wet" season, i.e. from November to March. This had given rise to the belief that the star-women, who make their camp within that heavenly spectacle, do not need fires. The same belief accounts for the fact that, within the Coal Sack there are no stars (the camp-fires of the star-women).

Orion and the Pleiades

Pl. 6aa illustrates the myth of Orion and the Pleiades. In the astronomical 532x
myth Orion, *a*, is a pack of dingoes, called *daiimini*, who are for ever chasing 776
the *Pleiades*, *b*, a group of wallabies, *karaka*. 821

The black vertical lines on either side of *a*, and *b*, starless spaces in the [773]
Milky Way, *Maludaianini*, are the trunks of celestial bloodwood trees; the short lines at right-angles, their limbs, and the dots on the background, the many spider-webs on their branches.

The large outer ovals, unidentified parts of the Milky Way, are patches of bare and grass-covered land of the sky, and the eight discs on the insides of the ovals, some of the larger stars.

Discussion

There is a wide difference between the astronomical myths of Melville 171
Island and those of the adjacent mainland. Nor do the Melville Islanders 773
have such a detailed knowledge of the night sky as the tribes of Arnhem
Land (Mountford, 1956, p. 479). This fact suggests, as do other aspects of 821
the culture, that the natives of Melville Island have been isolated from the mainland cultures for a long time.

The effects of this isolation are most evident in two of the sky myths, i.e., the Milky Way, and the constellations of Orion and the Pleiades.

Throughout Australia, with few exceptions, the Milky Way is looked upon as a celestial river, along which the sky people travel in their canoes, and gather their food (Mountford, 1956, p. 491). No trace of this widespread myth is present on Melville Island, the Milky Way being a multitude of caterpillar men, the *Maludaianini*.

Similarly with Orion and the Pleiades. In the Australian mainland myths, Orion is a man or men, and the Pleiades, a group of women, more often than not, the wives of the men of Orion.

In the place of this widespread myth, the Melville Islanders look upon the stars of Orion as a group of dingoes chasing the Pleiades, a mob of wallabies.

Even in the myth of the moon-man, there is a reversal of the adjacent Arnhem Land beliefs. In Arnhem Land, it was the moon who brought death to the world (Mountford, 1956, p. 495; Warner, 1937, p. 523). On Melville Island, it is the moon-man, *Tjapara*, who tries to stop *Purukupali* from imposing death on all living creatures.

CONCLUSION

105 171 THIS study of the Tiwi tribe of Melville and Bathurst Islands, made through the medium of their art, their myths, and their ceremonies, reveals wide differences between many phases of their cultural life and that of the aborigines who live on the adjacent mainland. These differences are probably the result of isolation caused by the dangerous tideways which have separated the two peoples from each other for an unknown, but probably lengthy, period.

[174] Though both are of aboriginal stock, and from the same cultural background (as indicated by basically similar creation stories), this isolation has allowed the two groups to develop independently. It may well be that the beliefs of the Tiwi represent those of one of the aboriginal migrations to Australia, and has remained somewhat constant, while the mainland people, enriched by occasional waves of new ideas, have developed a much more varied philosophical and cultural life.

The main differences between the two cultures can be summarized as follows:

171 ×532 (*a*) The art forms of the Melville and Bathurst Islands are so highly formalized that they seldom resemble the objects they represent. In contrast, the art of their neighbours on the mainland, the Arnhem Land aborigines, is not only entirely representational, but is probably a more vital and colourful art than exists in any other part of the continent.

171 765 (b) Compared with the rest of Australia, too, the ceremonies of the Tiwi are particularly limited, there being only two in the whole culture. The major ceremony, that of burial, is by far the more elaborate. It extends over several months, involves the co-operation of many people, and provides the tribe with a complete outlet for their grief, their music, their dancing, and their art. This ceremony is without parallel in Australia, and, so far as we know, elsewhere in the world.

171 881 The other ceremony, the Kulama, is a blending of several rituals: the initiation of men and women into the social grades of the tribe; the ceremony of preparing a poisonous yam for food,[66] which ceremony the participants believe prolongs the wet season; and the airing of grievances

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[114] [66] Spencer, 1928, p. 661, speaks of the Kulama as a food increase ritual. It is probable that Spencer was only expressing an opinion, having previously carried out research in Central Australia where increase rituals are both numerous and important. I did not obtain any evidence which indicated that food increase rituals were carried out by the Tiwi.

without quarrels. Again, there is no comparable ceremony on the mainland. 171 [881]

(c) Throughout the mainland of Australia, women occupy a low social status within the tribal framework. They are rigidly excluded from almost all aspects of the ceremonial life, and of initiation; they also are ignorant of most of the creation myths, the procedures of the secret rituals, and even the existence of the sacred objects. 171 562

These restrictions do not apply to the women of the Tiwi. They are initiated, side by side, with the men, and take similar though not identical parts in the ritual. They also participate in all phases of the burial ceremonies, at which they usually perform their own dance, the *Amburu*, but occasionally take part in dances which are performed by the men (Pl. 25c). A woman even has the right to cut and paint a burial pole, if her husband, who has been allotted the task, is unavoidably absent. In short, I was unable to find any aspect of Tiwi ceremonial life in which women could not take their part if they so desired.

(d) Although the creation story of the Tiwi is basically similar to that of the aborigines elsewhere in Australia, it is not as elaborate as, say, the travels of the Wawalik and the Djunkgao Sisters of Arnhem Land, recorded by Warner (1937), nor those of Central Australia, described by Spencer and Gillen (1899). I did not witness, nor did I hear of any specific Tiwi ceremony that commemorated the myths of the creation period. The dances in the *ilanias*, and the final rituals of the burial ceremony, usually referred to the various creatures or the elements, but seldom to an incident in the creation myth. 171 773 [535]

(e) There are also important differences between many of the myths of the Tiwi and those of the mainland people. For instance, in northern Australia, it is the moon man who brings death to mankind; in Melville Island the same moon-man endeavours to prevent death from coming to the world. I have already pointed out other wide differences between the astronomical myths of the mainland and those of the adjacent Melville Island.

On Arnhem Land, in fact, as far as South Australia, the aborigines, almost without exception, believe that their spirits go to a distant land not visible to human eyes, where there is continuous good weather, and an abundance of easily gathered food. 171 775

On the other hand, the Tiwi believe that at the close of the burial rituals the spirits of their dead return to their separate birthplaces, where each one hunts for food in the same manner as its living relatives, suffering, as they do, from exposure if the weather is inclement, and from hunger if the food supplies are limited.

411 (f) The aborigines of Melville and Bathurst Islands have a particularly
limited material culture. They have only double-ended, or simple wooden
412 barbed spears, which they throw by hand as one would throw a javelin.
This form of propulsion contrasts strongly with the mainland, where the
use of the spear-thrower is universal. Nor do the Tiwi use any small mounted
stone tools. Before the advent of steel, their only cutting tool was a cockle-
shell, held in the hand. It is likely that until about fifty years ago, until Joe
[177] Cooper brought the mainland aborigines, with their polished stone axes, to
Melville Island, the Tiwi possessed only a crudely flaked stone axe, mounted
in a length of split wood with the gum of a eucalyptus tree. In addition, all of
[415] the Tiwi carrying utensils are made of bark, because the Islanders lack the
[285] knowledge of any form of basketry or of the netting techniques.

It is evident, then, that within the range of the research I was able to
105 undertake, there are many differences between the culture of the Tiwi and
171 that of the aborigines of the nearby mainland. There is little doubt that
Miss Goodale's research, when published, will reveal further dissimilarities.[44]

My research, however, must be considered only as a preliminary study,
123 within the limits of the subjects enumerated. Lack of transport prevented
me from visiting any of the totemic sites, and limited time from investigating more fully other aspects of their beliefs.

It is my sincere hope that this study will be continued by another ethnologist before civilization has distorted or destroyed the interesting cultural life of the Tiwi.

[44] Since the writing of this book, Chaseling has referred (1957, p. 170) to a female
[114] ancestor (unnamed) who created much of the mainland side of Dundas Strait. This
information would suggest that Melville Island and the adjacent mainland are more
[773] closely linked mythologically, and perhaps culturally, than the evidence in this book
suggests. Further research on this subject will be awaited with interest.

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[Materials on representational art will be found in category 116, pp. 20, 23, 27, 30-32T, 33-35, 38-44A, 45-59, 63, 108-121, 125-127, 128A-144B, 145-146, 148-154B, 157-169.

Since much art relates to creation myths, totemic deities and sacred places, meteorologicalphenomena etc. for full explanation of these paintings categories 773, 776, 778, 821 and other 82 categories should be consulted.]